

SAUBHADRA

(Translation of Kirloskar's Sangita Saubhadra)

BY
S. B. Talekar

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With an introduction

by
Lieut. Col. Dr. Pandit Amarnatha Jha,
M. A., F.R. S. L., LL. D.,
Vice-Chancellor, Allahabad University.

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SAUBHADRA

Dedicated with gratitude

To

Prof. N. R. Phatak, B. A.

Ramnarayan Ruia College, Bombay.

FOREWORD

This translation of the Sangita Saubhadra, I wish to put before the English-knowing world. Saubhadra is a drama, originally written in Marathi by the late Mr. Balvant Pandurang alias Annasaheb Kirloskar, sixty two years back. It is an unparalleled Marathi drama, perfect in its technic and aesthetic treatment and has kept up its freshness and flavour even to this day. Drama is the interpretation of man's life; confirming this doctrine, Saubhadra reveals its 'beauty, solemnity and mystery.'

Therein is apparent the author's faculty of closely studying human nature, and of appropriating it as a vehicle of precise and effective expression of ideas. His prose proves his profound insight into the routine life of man; and his placid poetic diction testifies that he could imagine thoroughly the 'Spiritual abstraction', that gives a tinge of romance to human nature. The language of the drama is forceful and flowing, though easy, and it influenced the Marathi stage, in a great measure, when the latter was absolutely in a decaying condition. Endowed with these noble qualities, Saubhadra has immortalised not only itself as the best, but has, also, immortalised the status of the then revived Marathi stage, which has developed into one of the best of all the present-day-stages in India.

Enamoured of this grand drama, which is full of striking situations and sentiments, and inspired

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by the idea to create for this gem in Marathi an international place, if possible, I wrote this translation first as a contribution to the 'Kirloskar-week' held in Poona in November 1935, to celebrate the 50th death anniversary of Annasaheb Kirloskar, the sole great epoch-making Maharashtrian dramatist, of the 19th century; and now am I releasing it to the world at large. A translation is a predicament even for the learned, on account of its limitations. I had thoroughly realised it; but the intrinsic worth of the original and my high aspirations conspired and made me restless, and at last, emboldened me to dive deep into this matter to raise this beautiful and bright pearl - Saubhadra - to the sunlit surface, to be preserved carefully by the whole world in the form of this humble translation ! In regard to the method of translation pursued by me, I must say that I have generally translated the Marathi idioms literally rather than give English equivalents of the same - a method which should really allow us to enter into the originals immediately.

Before concluding, I gratefully express my indebtedness to Lieut. Col., Dr. Pandit Amarnatha Jha, M. A., F. R. S. L., LL. D., Vice-Chancellor, Allahabad University, who has kindly honoured my attempt by his Introduction, and to Shrimant Sardar, Rao Bahadur M. V. Kibe, M. A., Retd. Deputy Prime Minister, Holkar State, for his active and sympathetic encouragement right up from 1935 when he was the President of the Kirloskar-Week-Celebrations in Poona. Equally grateful am I to Prof. R. K. Lagu, M. A., for the valuable hints he gave me whenever I approached him in this

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connection. I thank very sincerely Mr. M.D. Kirtane, M. A., LL. B., and Mr. G. N. Joshi, B. A., L. T., who voluntarily rendered me their candid help in correcting and editing the text.

I deeply feel for the grievous loss of one of my great admirers the Late Prof. S. N. Chapekar, M. A., LL. B., to whose inspiration this work is mainly due. I remember him with all my heart before releasing this book to the world.

Writing is not the author's trust, it is reader's own; and with a heavy heart, I, herewith, entrust it to my readers, with a wish -

May it be honoured, if it is really meritorious !

Poona,
12th May, 1944.

S. B. Talekar.

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INTRODUCTION

In his "Prologue at the Opening of the Drury Lane Theatre", Johnson wrote :

"The stage but echoes back the public voice.

The drama's laws the drama's patrons give. "

This may not be universally true, but it certainly is true of the play that is to be staged for popular audiences. In India, there have been elaborate treatises on the theory of drama based on the Hindu view of life. Bharata, the first of the law-givers, Dhananjaya, and Vishwanatha, regard the drama as an important branch of poetry, which appeals to the sense of sight and hearing, and with which dance, music, gesture and representation are inseparably associated. While in Greece Aristotle spoke only of the beginning, middle and end, the Sanskrit writers speak of opening, progression, development, pause, and catastrophe. Emotion or sentiment is, as Raja Somendramohan Tagore put it, the corner-stone of theatrical representation. To quote Dr. S. K. De, there is a certain dominant or permanent mood latent in a spectator. This gradually develops, stage by stage, till it reaches the point of complete aesthetic enjoyment of *rasa*. Such a consummation is achieved by the presence of actors on the stage in the roles of certain characters, by the appropriate acting, by the exciting causes, such as the moon, flowers, etc, in love, by certain external manifestations, by certain passing or

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secondary moods which serve the purpose of completely manifesting the permanent mood. These peculiar features of Sanskrit dramaturgy were maintained through the centuries. There were many varieties of drama, no fewer than ten forms being enumerated by the earlier writers. They catered to all tastes and ranged from broad farce to abstract problem plays. Sanskrit dramas have continued to this day, although their number is not as large now as it used to be. But what Sanskrit did at one time for the court and the learned world, the modern languages are doing now for the masses.

The Marathi drama has an honourable history. Some of the leading men of letters have written plays which are not merely literary productions, but have a close association with the theatre. In consequence, they are both readable and fit for representation on the stage. Among the earlier playwrights, Kirloskar occupies an honoured place. Annasahib Kirloskar, who was born just a hundred years ago, wrote a number of plays. He was highly educated and was employed in a government office. But the uncongenial atmosphere of files and papers was not strong enough to damp his literary ardour. His plays include one on Allauddin's siege of Chitor, one on Shankaracharya, one on Shakuntala, one on Rama, and this present one on Subhadra. The topics are thus historical or legendary. Each of the plays has a large element of music.

"*Sangita Saubhadra*" is in five Acts. I cannot read it in the original, but I have read it in Mr. Talekar's English translation. To anyone who is familiar with the legend the play will be of absorbing

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interest. There are amusing interludes and interesting episodes, but the back-ground is reverential and romantic. The songs add to the charm. There is much that is caviare to the general, but much too that the popular audience would enjoy. The translator has done his work well and his rendering is very readable. I trust the work will be well received and we shall have from Mr. Talekar further translations.

3-5-44.

Amaranatha Jha.

ERRATA

PREFACE

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
i	23-24	of par excellence	par excellence
9	26	on stage	on the stage
18	13	thou	Thou
19	24	of	on
29	4	holy	(holy
30	2	Tirthas	Tirtha
33	10	none not	none, not
39	4	dose	does
40	2	moster's	monster's
44	22	meet	meet.
49	1	Unwildy	Unwieldy
51	8	carriedi nto	carried into
56	15	disclose	' disclose
62	18	sighr	sight
63	18	Lale	Lele
63	32	cach	each
64	21	words	words "

TEXT

3	9	He	God
6	3	Exit	Exeunt
7	2	respond my	respond to my
9	22	Uncomparable	Incomparable
11	18	in teens	in our teens
13	11	brood	brood in

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13	25	to whom	whom
15	9	that she is being	she is being
		searched	searched for
21	10	independence	dependence
22	12	Why none of	Why does none
		them peeps	of them peep
30	19	was	would have been
31	24	him	his cause
32	top	Act I	Act II
32	14	only	net
47	30	?	.
54	23	advise	advice
64	3	Liege Lord	Liegelord
101	19	"	"
71	20	innopportune.	inopportune
77	top	SAVBHADRA	SAUBHADRA
79	10	Its	It is
82	23		
84	3		
104	1		
88	9	his holiness	His Holiness
92	19	"	"
94	14	embarass-	embarass

NOTES

135	28	wouldb ecome	would become
148	10	selfe-vident	self-evident
152	top	Act IV	Act I
163	17	occured	occurred
165	27	psudo	pseudo
168	25	agrieved	aggrieved
180	3	Sha	She

P R E F A C E

Maharashtrian stage before the advent of Mr. Kirloskar

Kirloskar's Sangita Saubhadra appeared on the Maharashtra-stage in 1882, as the first self-reliant drama from the view-point of the theatrical and histrionic art. But the constituents of this art have as remote an origin as 1290 A. D., although dramas were not actually written as such till 1682. During the period from 1682 to 1832 King Shahaji of Tanjore - nephew of the founder of the Maratha Empire King Shivaji the Great - his successors and learned dependents wrote dramas, which may be believed as pioneer works in this direction. All the same, till the advent of Mr. Kirloskar, there seems, to have been a disinclination in general towards this and all other fine arts, justifiably due to the Nation's utter engrossment in warring with foreign invaders, who threatened the people with the constant revolution of the political, religious and social problems.

During the later period of the Peshava-rule, when some merry-monarchs were in ascendancy, this art ought to have thrived. But it did not, because the atmosphere was not still congenial : the intelligent indulged in poetry only, though of par excellence, on account of the personal qualities of the poet and the actual volume of the work; and the indulgent at large were engrossed only in the obscene Tamashas patronized by the rich, and in the uncouth

It is after the English rule that Maharashtrians began again to cultivate taste for dramas. The nation was again becoming delightfully aware of its own splendid and inspiring culture and its latent capacities. The people were again content to enjoy the gorgeoussness of life without reducing it to moral problems. The learned were prepared to share the ardours of drama purely for their invigorating sake. The literary dignitaries either fell back on the treasures in Sanskrit or in English. They wrote dramas novels and poetry. For dramas they took to Kalidasa and Shakespeare principally. Independent attempts were few, but were made by scholars like the late Mr. V. J. Kirtane; they indicated their dramatic genius. The learned did not hate the stage; but they hated the uncouth nature of performances, that were in vogue then. The following extract from the epilogue to the performance of Venisamhara by the students of the Deccan College, Poona, will give the true perspective of what was then despised. They said,

Illiterate players have usurped the stage,
With scenes obscene depraved this rising age."

It will be obvious from the above satire, that professional dramatists of the age, paid very little

attention to the art of drama. But as the satirist points out, the professionals were illiterate, indiscreet and inartistic. Yes; they were from the masses who had not as yet got access to the general education. They followed the tradition of which Mr. Bhavé was the pioneer. In the year 1843, he performed his maiden drama *Sitasvayamvara*, under the patronage of the Raja of Sangli. The nature of the performance was somewhat the same as that of 'Bhagavata or Yakshagana' dramas, then in vogue in the North Kanara. The exact nature of Bhavé's dramas was as follows—

Sutradhara used to offer prayers first to various deities and then to God Ganapati and Sarasvati (His consort) — that the former should ward off all difficulties that would come in the way of the performance, and the latter should bless the actors with fluent tongue.

Then entered Vidushaka (clown) in the guise of some rustic creature (Vanachara). The curtain used to go up after his entry.

Sutradhara then invoked God Ganapati, who appeared on the stage in his conventional form, i. e. with an elephant head etc. singing and dancing. He made his exit after blessing Sutradhara, that the play would go on unimpeded. Then a prayer was offered to Sarasvati with a request that all players should be blessed with the fluent tongue. In response Sarasvati, seated on the peacock (made of paper and feathers), entered dancing and singing, blessed the devotee that his actors will speak like Brihaspati himself and went in.

The drama proper began after all these conventions were observed in style and strain. Only the mythological theme formed the subject of the Drama. It was a narration. No attention was paid to the dramatic construction to conform to the three 'unities', or to the development of characters. The dialogue, for the most part being left to the memory of the players, was loose and

and irrelevant. Scenes were hackneyed and formed (i) Office of Gods, (ii) of Demons (iii and iv) apartments of their wives. Discussions of conquest of each other formed part of all conversations. Two or three offices were shown simultaneously on the stage. The nature of the rôles played by the actors was —

Sutradhara used to recite all songs, prompt the actors and arrange to give them rest. He was, therefore, present on the stage throughout the performance. So also was Vidushaka, who was entrusted with the stage and theatre-management besides his part. God Ganapati in red vestures, and with a red trunk made of paper did his assigned part, but generally gasped for breath before he finished it, as the trunked head-gear which he wore over his face allowed no ventilation. A young and handsome boy with sweet voice was always selected to play Sarasvati, who entered with an image of a peacock tied at his waist, and with a kerchief which he constantly waved to indicate the motions of the Peacock's dance, while singing and dancing himself. Demons created horror, by their make-up — their faces striped with broad patches of the red, black and white colours generally, mouth studded with big teeth made of ivory or tin, shoulders bearing artificial arms pasted with gold-leaves, neck bedecked with big beads of glass of deep and variegated colours, waist wound with dhotis and sadis together, and with coloured hemp fibers for the loose hair, and last but not least with a naked sword in their hand. With the fire effect in the background, the demon entered the stage roaring like thunder and showing feats of the sword-play while roaring. They may have amused adults of the time, but froze with fright children and women spectators, sometimes. Gods were, on the contrary, mild in their dress, decoration and appearance — their forehead marked with Mudras in white; they bore four arms, and wore an artificial tiara hallowed

with peacock-feathers at the back. They spoke in the style of the Shastris and Panditas using Sanskrit words and long and complicated sentences. Female characters were a bit more pleasant. Their sentiment was either love or pathos for the most part. When, however, themes from Ramayana were the subject of performance, the characters of Ravana and Maruti were necessarily introduced. Ravana entered with ten heads and twenty hands; and Maruti with a tail nearly twenty to thirty feet in length made of elastic bamboo wrapped in rags to give it an appearance of the hairy skin. Naturally two or three people were given to balance the unwieldy tail, and make him jump and run on the stage.

Peculiarity of Narada - his tuft of hair always standing erect on the head and his Mudras - were always observed scrupulously.

The nature of the presentation of the drama has been dealt with so far. As regards the themes : they were all from the Indian Mythology. The very object of the poets - dramatists in those days went by the name poets - was to acquaint the people with the thrilling and appealing topics from the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata as they were and in their fullest extent, and without regard even to the primary principles of the Drama. The theme, moreover, was reproduced in metrical composition leaving very little scope for the dialogue. The composition was often technically defective, although simple and natural with a tinge of sentiment. Mr. Vishnudasa Bhawe as a pioneer was the most known of all, and the tradition he set up was faithfully and implicitly followed by the rest. There arose many poets, writing for various theatrical companies, that followed this art as a profession. They had their regime for nearly thirty years. In the early part of this period, dramas did not find their way to the press. But in the last twenty years.

i. e. from 1860 to 1880 a number of dramas appeared in the printed form, which afford a facility to describe their nature. It is discernible, that the main attraction of all these performances were the roaring entries of demons with the proverbial shout 'Allalala Durr !'. They were hence aptly styled later as 'Allalala-durr-dramas.' They were also called 'Takad Dhom Dramas', since the continuous high-pitched din of the Mrudunga, which the Sutradhara or the orchestra played vigorously, saturated the atmosphere.

Besides this there was hardly any attraction. The dialogue was a negligible factor, as the whole field was divided into two elements (i) delirious yells of demons, and their feats of the sword-play (ii) and dry music of the Sutradhara. Whatever opportunities were given to the dialogues as such were seized by Vidushaka and Sutradhara. Here came in the element of 'humour' which was crude, flat and irrelevant, and had no cordial relation to the plot of the play. The main characters remained untouched by this element, for they had nothing to speak practically. The humour was rough and vulgar, and all the more debased by mere quibble on words, and the apish pranks of Vidushaka. It was absolutely uninviting. If only these poets or dramatists were in touch with the Sanskrit dramas, had they studied them with the learned Panditas or Shastris of the time, they would have benefited themselves and merited their plays with the cultural values. But either they cared not for any such development, or the learned did not care to give them any assistance. Reasonably, it appears that those who were in the profession did not feel the necessity of acquiring extra knowledge, being contented with the popularity they were enjoying. The result was that they quite failed to make the drama a living act. They never made any attempt to reform the stage, rather it was beyond them to dive deep into this matter. Much less did they care to study

human nature around them. Had they close'y studied it, they would have created some aesthe ic beauty and would have endowed their plays with some living charm. 'The solitary exception to this state of affairs was the presentation of a Sanskrit drama by Krishnamitra namely 'Prabodha-chandro-daya,' which was translated into Marathi by Messers Amarapurkar and Bapat Shastri '¶

But real impetus to the development of the Marathi Dramas was received since 1857 with the advent of the University education. The learned people like Parashuramapant Taty Godbole found that classical Sanskrit dramas were already being translated into foreign languages, but not in their own Mother-language Marathi. The dignitaries were Mr. Godbole himself, Krishnashastri Rajavade and Ganeshashastri Lele, who from 1857 to 1877 brought in Marathi about fifteen Sanskrit classical dramas, which include Shakuntala, Mritchakatika, Uttara-Ramacharita, Mudrarakshasa, Malavikagnimitra and etc. And as these learned Panditas had a critical eye, they could preserve in their renderings the classical flavour of the original. Many of them were staged to the delight of the people. Yet the real charms of Drama, that would make people shun the golden slumbers to muse over their splendour and vitality were not set astir. The stage was still obscure, and waited illumination at the hands of a genius. And it was destined to be glorified by a star.

The Late, B. P. alias Annasaheb Kirloskar's life-sketch

The star was born - B. P. alias Anna Kirloskar, one hundred years back, at Gurlhosura, on the Gudhi Padava day (the New-year day of the Hindus), 31st March 1843 A. D., to hold a high place of the epoch-making dramatist of the nineteenth-century-

¶ cf. Prof. Dandekar, Marathi Natya-srishti, part I.

Maharashtra by a common consent of the critical opinion.

He comes from a poor family of Brahmana Priests, who migrated from their native place Kirlosi (District Ratnagiri) to Karnatak in order to seek fortune. They reached Gurlhosura which was hallowed by Saint Chidambara-svami since 1802. This village is situated on the bank of the river Malaprabha in the district of Belgaum. It was esteemed as a holy Place; many Panditas and Shastris lived there.

The grand-father of Anna Kirloskar was the Sar-Subha of the Province of Dharwar, and was also a favourite of Chidambar-svami. His two sons, therefore, received cultural education from the Panditas. Pandurang, the father of our dramatist, especially developed critical faculties, and turned out well-versed in Sanskrit Poetry and Drama, particularly Abhijnana-Shakuntala. This was the cultural heritage of Anna Kirloskar from his father, which ultimately proved to be the main source of his achievements.

As a boy, he preferred creating a field for his high-soaring genius to being pent up in the school. More often than not was he given facilities to prosecute his studies in the early and latter part of his youth. But no! He indulged in composing poems, and finished his epic Kiratarjuna - an episode from Mahabharata, when he was barely fourteen. All the same, he studied at his father's feet, with rapt attention, Kalidasa, Raghunatha Pandita and such other poets.

His restless activities at last found an immense field for him by starting independently in 1860, at his own native place, the festival in commemoration of Shri Shankaracharya. It yielded to him ample scope for his limpid songs, marked with pure sentiment and devotion to God. The imagery in them distinguishes him from other poets of his age. He created fascinating word-pictures in a delightful

style of lively diction. He was not a staunch religionist, but he had deep faith in God; and whenever he praises Him, his sentiments reach their height. Kirata-vesha, Tambulas and etc. as songs, and Harishchandra, Satyabhama, Devayani and others as musical stories are excellent instances of the flourish of his poetic genius.

He, therefore, was sent to Poona for studies, but he showed no progress beyond the Junior First Standard of the Poona High-school. He was always after dramatic performances, and after Haridasas for whom he prepared his musical stories. Poona afforded proper atmosphere also for the propagation of his ideals. He unfailingly formed close acquaintances with the members of the theatrical companies, who happened to have a sojourn in Poona. And unlike his school-studies, he never missed a single performance. He was not now satisfied merely with supplying musical stories to others. His ambition was to have an independent performance of his own drama. He succeeded at last in collecting a group of amateurs with a proposal to perform his 'Vikrama-charitra' (story on the life of King Vikrama), in Poona. But as some of the parties, coming from the notable families shirked to appear on stage in Poona, he selected Ahamadnagar for his maiden performance. The troupe presented there the proposed play together with a farce Elphinston and Bajirao. They also performed the English version of 'Pramila-Svayamvara' at the Garrison theatre, A'nagar. The troupe then went to Khandesh also. But on account of this enterprize he came into monetary difficulties, which he warded off by disposing of whatever valuables he had on his person, and was ambitiously determined to pursue the mission of his life.

Getting wind of his miserable condition abroad, and realising the difficulties at home due to the sad demise of his grand-father, one of his well-wishers was sent to bring him back to home. Kirloskar went

home. He was successfully dissuaded from following his pursuits further. He, therefore, remained at home for the succeeding two years, and composed a long poem on the life of King Shivaji to compete for the prize, announced by the Daxina Prize Committee. He suffered a failure in that attempt.

At the age of twenty-four, he thought of studying the law at Dharwar; but soon found it uninteresting. He thence came down to Belgaum seeking service and stayed there for some seven years. He secured first an employment as an assistant teacher in the Anglo-Vernacular School. But as if service was not his goal, he always trimmed his sail to the lodgings of dramatic companies and tried to get himself absorbed in that atmosphere while pulling on in service somehow. He changed his job and went to the Police Department. That too he left and joined the Marathi-section in the office of the Commissioner for Revenues, Southern Division; and left Belgaum only when the Head-quarters of the Office were shifted to Poona.

At Belgaum he was the most popular figure of his time. People loved his songs of both secular and sacred nature. He had also laid his fingers on versifying Euclid's Theorems. He wrote two dramas—(i) Allauddinachi Chitodagadavara Svavi (Siege of Chitur by Alladin), and (ii) Shankara-Digvijaya (Shankaracharya's Conquest of the World). He instituted Bharata-Shastrottejaka-Mandali, that is known to have performed Shakuntala in Sanskrit. During his stay at Belgaum, he happened to see the performance of 'Parijataka', given by a Kannada Theatrical Company. He appreciated its merits, and intensely desired to perform it in the same style. He tried and gathered around himself male and female actors; but had to give up the attempt, utterly disappointed by absolutely illiterate females, who had offered to play, but who unfortunately were unable to catch the spirit of the proposed drama. He then directed the same play in another

company. Regarding the nature of songs in it, one of his biographers the late Mr. S. B. Muzumdar says, 'The nature of songs in this drama was such that they could be easily sung by the players themselves (which was not a vogue till then, Sutradhara himself reciting all the verses and songs). This proves, that Anna had an idea of musical play since long.' But Anna had this idea, it may be said, from his boyhood when he composed musical stories.

Along with the Office, he came to stay in Poona in 1880. In the natural course of service, he would have risen as his colleagues did. But unfortunately for himself, and fortunately for the Maharashtra Stage, he was fond of - nay addicted to the charms of the Histrionic Art. He, therefore, tried to remain in altogether a different millenium, and unlike others did achieve the status of an epoch-maker to immortalize his name in the annals of Maharashtra.

In Poona, he began his illustrious rôle. A Parsi Theatrical Company visited Poona just then, and performed their patent show 'Indra-Sabha' (Darabar of Indra). Kirloskar was deeply impressed by the performance. The scenic effect influenced and the music spelled him. Ideas began to revolve in his head. Would 'Shakuntala' be staged in that style? 'Yes!' answered his inspiration. He started translating into Marathi the Classical Romancc - a bold attempt as against six previous ones of the same play by the eminent Panditas and Shastris of renown. He worked with a dash, an unparalleled one, and finished the first act in a couple of hours. Inspiration worked! Within three months from the conception of the idea, the first four acts of 'Sangita Shakuntala' were publicly performed. 'Every one acquitted himself of his part in a creditable manner. But Dushyanta, Shakuntala and Kanva deserve special mention. On the occasion of his meeting with Shakuntala, in the lonely bower by the

river side, Dushyanta displayed his abilities to such perfection as to evoke repeated deafening applause from the audience.—'The fame of the performance reached Bombay. And immediately after twenty days, on 20th November 1880, Kirloskar graced the Bombay audience with the same sweet thrill. Great personalities had attended the show, and were pleased so much so that another performance was courted the very next day. Kirloskar had to refuse it with apologies, having no leave for the purpose. 'Shakuntala' was completed in the following year. Dr. Keilhorn in whose honour a performance was staged, observes, 'I see before me the old Rishis of ancient times in their true garb.'

The year 1882 saw the prized product of Kirloskar's dramatic conceit 'Sangita Saubhadra' upto three acts. The people had a ground to suppose, that the success of Shakuntala was mainly due to the established fame of the world-classic. They were afraid of when Kirloskar announced his second venture, whether it would prove equally illustrious. The public both of Poona and Bombay, as if through Late Mr. Mahadeva Chimanaji Apte - one of the translators of Shakuntala before Kirloskar, expressed it in writing, out of implicit love and regard for the rising dramatist. The public was diffident, but the dramatist was confident and adamant; and did prove himself true by rising to the expectation, and in the high esteem of the people, who afterwards received and honoured Sangita Saubhadra as the 'Shakuntala of Maharashtra.' The grand opening show was held for the first three acts, in the Purnananda Theatre, Poona, on 18th November 1882. This is the day which will be written in golden letters in the history of Maharashtrian Drama. The aforesaid drama was completed in March 1883.

Uptilnow Kirloskar had not made drama his profession. But realizing now that he had got two great dramas, so well received in great cities like Poona and Bombay, and that he had established

thereby his status and fame, an idea of starting his own dramatic company propped up into his head. In his premier ventures he was assisted by gifted artists both from his office and also from outside. Almost all of them were educated. Outsiders were willing to be with him and others were intensely sympathetic towards him. So with the willing consent of them all, and his actor-associates, he instituted his own concern under the name "Kirloskar Sangita Mandali". He, with his famous two plays, visited Sholapur first, then Poona on their way to Bombay, Bombay, Indore, Devas and Ahamadnagar. He was too liberal and the Company was not managed well with the result, that his associates who had not bothered him much till then began to disperse one by one after the Ahamadnagar sojourn. It was feared that the company was coming to a sudden close. But in a very short time he secured assistance of a big financier Mr. Vithoba Gulave of Panvel (District Kolaba). The financier took the whole management in his hands with a promise to take up every monetary responsibility sheerly out of love and regard for the dramatist and for Mr. Moroba Vagholikar, a gifted songster of Poona, and the merited hero in Mr. Kirloskar's plays. All joined again and gathered at Panvel - now the main seat of the Company, under the new constitution.

There came suggestions pouring down from various quarters for a novel play. Kirloskar's inclination was chiefly towards some new and gripping mythological story. He aspired to claim originality again. He set aside all suggestions, and independently selected the theme of Rama's voluntary abdication of the throne, i. e. Rama-Rajya-Viyoga from Ramayana.

Regarding his writing of 'Sangita Rama-Rajya-Viyoga', another biographer who was also the general secretary of the Kirloskar Nataka Mandali writes, 'Wonder was that he wrote the prose as well as

the songs without a scratch, as if he was reproducing what he had conned by heart.'

The first performance was proposed to be held at Bombay. But Poona being the prime seat of Kirloskar's dramatic activities, her claim was so pressing that he was required to open the show first at Poona, on 20th October 1834. Kirloskar played the King Dasharatha with consummate skill along with Messers Vagholikar and Kolhatkar as Sage Vasishtha and Manthara (Queen's attendant) respectively. The play made a very deep impression with its pathetic sentiment; and it has not been changed as yet, although generations are changing one after another. The Company toured continuously for a year right upto the Central Provinces and the Central India, and returned to Poona for a vacation. Kirloskar gave a performance on 7th October 1885, which unluckily proved to be his last. Within a month hence, on the 2nd night of November, this brilliant luminary suddenly waned. The Gifted Organ-voice of Maharashtra was hushed up by Death! But Death has no power to hush up the eternal spells of Kirloskar's magnificent works, in which he has poured his very self. Self is immortal!

His Works

Kirloskar as a pre-eminent dramatist transcends all the prior and many posterior dramatists of meagre and notable endowments respectively, by his breadth, consistency and artistic innovations. He had cultivated habit of telling great stories musically since he was a boy. In all his verses and songs are apparent spontaneity of feeling, livingness in characters, and lively psychological effects. This very style is seen further developed in his dramas - (i) Allauddinachi Chidodagadavara Svari (Siege of Chitur by Alladin), (ii) Shankara-Digvijaya (Shankaracharya's Conquest of the World), (iii) Sangita Shakuntala, (iv) Sangita Saubhadra and (v) Sangita Rama-rajya-viyoga.

In every one of these works, he shows that he had segregated himself from the tradition in the choice of his subjects and their psychological and dramatic treatment. There was a vogue of presenting some farce at the end of the main drama. He himself had done so in his maiden attempt at Ahamadnagar in 1863. These farces had not got a proper form just like the Mythological or 'Bhagavata' plays of the time. But with the study of English and Sanskrit dramas, ideas went on developing. And Kirloskar thought it worthwhile to write small dramas (Naticas) to be performed at the end of the main play. As an experiment he wrote Alladin's siege of Chitur. The subject is from the Indian History. Alladin - the Khilji Emperor besieged the fortress of Chitur, having come to know that the Queen Padmini of Chitur was the most beautiful 'pattern of excellent nature'. It is an one-act-play in five scenes developed step by step. (a) Under the garb of religious zeal, Alladin besieges the famous fortress with the intention to seduce and bear away Padmini the Queen; (b) but realizing that it entailed great losses poses to be satisfied with seeing her image reflected in a mirror. (c) The Rana of Chitur, who as a host comes to see him off upto his camp, is treacherously taken captive and asked to surrender Padmini, and then (d) Padmini's cunning plan to set her husband free by pretending her own surrender, but sending a contingent of warriors under the leadership of her brother in her own palanquins covered with Parada; and (e) Alladin's confusion at the sight of the armed contingent instead of Padmini resulting in the abandonment of his own plan on this and also on account of the news of the enemy's attacks on his eastern front.' (cf. Samagra Kirloskar, p. 25).

It is technically a happy piece - a tragedy from the view point of Alladin. It reaches its climax in the fourth scene, when Alladin is dreaming of having almost, secured Padmini for himself and when

his dream is shattered - himself confronted by the surprising manifestation of the armed brother of Padmini instead of herself. Kirloskar has depicted his characters well; and "the rôle, which the Minister of Alladin plays by fanning his master's carnal desire for Padmini, and by insinuating him to carry on his plan, reminds one of 'Iago' in Othello." (ibid., p. 26).

Shankaradigvijaya was written in 1873. There is no other drama in Marathi literature of such a vast extent. "For its comparison, we will have to look to the 'Passion Play' on the life of Christ, performed every ten years in Germany, at Oberammergau," (ibid p. 31). If this nature of the drama were taken into consideration, we will find all niceties and artistry in its treatment. The theme is the propagation of the doctrine of knowledge by Shri Shankaracharya. The story begins right up from the discussions amongst Gods about his birth and mission of life, - annihilation of Buddhism and re-establishment of the Vedic polity taking Advaita as the base. And it ends with the Acharya's completion of the mission. The source of the play is the treatise by Shri Sadanandasvami, viz. 'Shankara - vijaya'. A free play is given to the supernatural element. Various sentiments Shanta (quietism), Vira (heroism), Shringara (love), have been well depicted in an appropriate style of diction, which heightens characterization also. When one compares the original treatise in Sanskrit with this drama, one is convinced of Kirloskar's abilities in dramatising such dry topics and making them livelier and more enjoyable than the original by his inviting innovations, e. g. Act III, scenes 2 and 6. The entry of the hero-Shankaracharya - in the house of his antagonist Mandanamishra in Act IV, scene 4, and also the entry of Sarasvati - the wife of Mandanamishra, just when the latter is eager to renounce his mundane possessions in Act IV, scene 7, are as surprising as dramatic. Here the dramatist does

not stick to the original, being conscious of the medium of presentation he had chosen. The argument of Sarasvati to relieve her husband from the clutches of Sanyasa, "Aye, Shankaracharya! the Shastras believe, that husband and wife are inseparable. Unless and until, therefore, you have not vanquished me, you cannot boast of having conquered Mandanamishra completely. You have only conquered half of himself. You can initiate that half to Sanyas, if you like. But I swear, I won't allow you to touch his left side, (that is myself). Vanqish me first to carry on your intent.", recalls to our mind the spirit of Portia's argument in *The Merchant of Venice* Act IV, scene 1,

"Tarry a little; - there is something else.—

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;

The words expressly are, a pound of flesh :

Take then the bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the law of Venice, confiscate

Unto the state of Venice."

Mr. Kirloskar's predecessors have never attempted to study the life around them; naturally one will find no reflections of realism in their writing or its presentation, which may have given a tinge of romance to the drama. Kirloskar shows such study, and evinces it in his works for example scenes 1 and 4 in Act III, which deal respectively with the anxiety of a childless mother, and with the storm of joyful activities of people on getting a male issue in later age.

No work in the present age can be absolutely original. The drama under treatment is also not an exception to this condition. But the skill of the author lies in the selection of the essentials to be adopted, and the expansion of the suggestive points in brief from the original. Kirloskar has ably

expanded the idea, in the original, of Acharya's entering the dead body of the King Amaraka and reviving him to life in order to study the science of Erotics (Kama), to be able to satisfy Mandana's wife Sarasvati, who had challenged his omniscience by asking him to explain the conjugal love and say definitely that they are Atmika (Universal). 'The original dispenses this topic in nine verses only, while he expands it in two scenes 3rd and 5th in Act V.' (cf. Samagra Kirloskar, p. 36).

The noble utterances such as given vent to by Sarasvati - " O Lord of the Universe, I did realize that thou art the ocean of all lores. But pardon, I put those questions to Thee, only to manifest to the women of the world the righteous way of struggling to save the life of their husbands, and not to question or test Thy knowledge and authority. —" (Act V, scene 7.), - utterances with which the play is decked all over go to prove that the dramatist was truly inspired to direct the people to the righteous path. And taking into consideration the condition of the Stage about the year 1873, one should be proud to say that Kirloskar was trying to give a turn to the then existing Stage, and elevate it to the best of his abilities.

Sangita Shakuntala : It has been observed in Kirloskar's life, that Shakuntala was translated before him many times by the learned Panditas and Shastris. Every one of the works had its own flavour as a fine piece of literature. "Parashuramapanta's tastefulness and elegance, Rajavade's flourish of scholarship, Gunjikar's Vaidarbhi style on the lines of Vishnu-shastri Chiplunakar, Apate's novel way of entertainment, and Kirloskar's gloss and glitter appropriate to the stage accompanied by a novel way of musical element are the specialities of the respective translations. 3rd Kirloskar was not so keen about literal translation; but he was very particular in the exposition of sentiment (Rasa) in the original. The very first verse of Dushyanta's charioteer in the original

has been transformed in a striking manner of a master-hand. Copiously can Kirloskar's abilities in this respect be illustrated, but for want of space in this brief account of his works; still one cannot resist from pointing out some of his excellent songs - The description of the precincts of the hermitage; Song on Shakuntala's beauty; the song addressed to the bee, molesting Shakuntala, in the first Act. There are as many songs as verses in the original and none of them less merited in the depiction of sentiment or in the excellence of Muse, which the God-gifted poet Kalidasa exposes. The considered opinion of those days and of today corroborate and purport to say, 'That Mr. Kirloskar started the tradition of musical plays by presenting Shakuntala at the outset is the most important and memorable factor from the various points of view. The general public of Maharashtra was not at all acquainted with the literature in Sanskrit till then. If at all any sign of such a contact is apparent, it was restricted to a particular class of people, and mainly due to the publication of translations of Shakuntala, Venisamhara, Uttararamacharita and Mritchakatika; and also due to the essay of the five great Sanskrit Poets. It was at the most at some musical sermon that the common-place had an opportunity of hearing a passing reference to Kalidasa. Just before Mr. Kirloskar, the students of the Deccan College, Poona, had begun to perform Mritchakatika, Venisamhara and etc. in Sanskrit; these plays were unintelligible to the ordinary Marathi-knowing commoner. But when The Sangalikar and The Aryoddharaka Nataka Mandalis produced those dramas as translated by Tatya (Parashuramapanta Godbole) in the vernacular medium in 1878 and 1879 respectively, the general public got acquainted with them to realise that there was such wealth of dramas in Sanskrit. Tatya had translated Abhijnana Shakuntala the unprecedented dramatic piece by the Crown-head of the guild of Poets.

Kalidasa, that made the Western Doctors dance in ecstasy. None showed guts to stage it. But when the late Annasaheb presented it in a novel form, sweetened with striking musical hits, and amidst the new style of settings, the public was at once brightened ! No sooner the Greatest of poets was introduced this way, than he created regard for himself, and kindled the flame of self-respect in the mind of the general public. The lion came to know that he was a lion. Having revealed to the general public the unparalleled splendour of the works of Kalidasa, Anna's Sangita Shakuntala earns the entire credit of the happy fusion of Sanskrit and Prakrit. That is why this revolutionary drama must specially be commemorated.'

Sangita Rama-Rajya-Viyoga was Kirloskar's last drama, left unfinished having developed it upto a portion of the fourth act. Some of the posterior dramatists tried to finish it in five acts. But the posthumous portion has not got the same genuineness or flavour as that of the first three acts. The reason why Kirloskar left it unfinished is, it is said, that he had no boy-parties in view to play the rôles of Rama and Sita. Whatever it is, whoever have tried to finish the drama have not taken into consideration the spirit in which the first scene of the fourth act was written by Mr. Kirloskar.

The story in short is, that King Dasharatha, being old, wanted to renounce the throne in favour of his eldest son Rama. The subjects, and all his three queens, his preceptor and ministers were enraptured on account of the king's noble decision and every one partook in the grand preliminary preparations of Rama's coronation ceremony. But the whole atmosphere of jubilation was spoiled by the attitude of the intriguing Manthara - the foster-mother of Kaikeyi, the crowned queen of Dasharatha. She instigated the people to condemn Rama and champion the cause of Bharata - Kaikeyi's

son, who was away at his maternal uncle's then. She also wanted to prejudice Kaikeyi's mind, who so innocently loved Rama even like her own son. But before she had an opportunity to reach and poison Kaikeyi's ears, she was taken captive by the citizens themselves and was produced before the seat of judgment - Vasishtha, who asked her to be sent to and locked up in the prison, pending further enquiries, until the coronation was over. Simultaneously with Manthara, another culprit Shambuk was sent by Rama for his guilt of performing Brahmanic austerities being a Shudra (in the Uttar-Rama-Charitam of Bhavabhuti he has been referred to as Shudra-Muni, cf. U. R. Act II, v. 8), as a result of which sin the son of a pious Brahmana Vitihotra prematurely died; the Brahmana implored King Dasharatha to find out the sinner and punish him so that his son would revive; King Dasharatha appointed Rama on that mission just a day prior to his coronation; Rama succeeded in his mission and thus the Shudra, Shambuka, was produced before the judgment-seat. Shambuka was released with a warning not to go out of his way and encroach upon the rights exclusively assigned to Brahmins. Disgusted with the caste-distinction advocated thus by the high-handed Brahmanas, that deprived the Shudras from self-exaltation even, and hating their polity, uncatholic from his personal point of view, he determined to wreak vengeance on them and also on Rama, who, he thought, had grossly insulted him by the disgraceful manner of tying him to the hind post of his chariot while bringing him to the Court of Law; he, therefore, made a common cause with Manthara and effected secretly her release, - disguising himself as a maid servant coming to serve her food at noon, with the sealed letter from the minister as a token of permit to enter the jail, and remaining in the jail in her place to carry on the conspiracy smoothly. Manthara thus free again hurried to Kaikeyi's apartment and vitiated her

mind completely against Rama, and against the King's attitude in patronizing Rama, and depriving Bharata—her own son—from Royalty. Finding the peg well tuned to her wicked design, Manthara reminded Kaikeyi of the king's promise to fulfil any of her two desires as a mark of deep gratitude, he felt at his favourite Queen's splendid help in voluntarily supporting the broken chariot by inserting her own hand through the wheel thus to join it to its main axis. Kaikeyi took the hint and asked the retiring King to fulfil his promise and grant her desires immediately. By the first, she wanted him to send Rama away in exile for fourteen years; and by the second, install Bharata on the throne of Ayodhya, the very next day. The king was shocked; he tried to dissuade her to withdraw her demands; promised to enthrone Bharata instead of Rama; implored that she should at least allow Rama to separately live with him; assured also that there would be no trouble on that account to Bharata. Obdurately, she wanted both the desires to be immediately fulfilled; and in case they were denied, she threatened the king with committing suicide instantaneously even before his own eyes. The king's entreaties were of no avail, his threats futile, his arguments useless. The very idea of his separation from his beloved son in his old age was so rude, that he fell to the ground senseless, his life only lingering and hankering after the last sight of Rama, at the end of the third act.

These events have taken place in the first three acts, from morn till eve. The scene of the first act is the King's palace—the Interlude (Vishkambhaka) being played at some vestibule near the main gate to facilitate Manthara's exit towards the Bazaar; and the main act in the King's court. The incidents come up to the imprisonment of Manthara, and release of Shambuka. The second Act contains three places; first the outside of the main gate of the palace, second the prison and third the inner apartment of Queen Kaikeyi, but they are linked

well. The third act includes the Royal Court and Kaikeyi's boudoir, to which the king goes to rest after his open declaration of resigning the throne in favour of Rama in the open Darbar. The topic throughout is the coronation of Rama, and every character that is introduced is seen either favourably or adversely working towards it. In consideration of the strict observance of these dramatic unities, and of the gripping struggle heightened by the element of contrast between wisdom and stupidity, solicitation and obduracy, pity and cruelty, this drama, though unfinished, is so impressive that it will not be a mistake to value it as Kirloskar's supreme work. Every character, moreover, and his or her mood is depicted in the masterly manner, which evinces the close study of human nature on the part of the dramatist; the development of the plot is gradual and ascending to reach the contemplated climax, never losing hold on the mind of the spectators, by subtle turns and incidental touches of dramatic irony. The dramatist prepares the mind of the spectator to face the impending catastrophe and has not taken him unawares by thrusting any incident unwarranted. The drama is couched in a style that is grand.

The appreciation though in brief will remain incomplete unless it is said, that Kirloskar has created a real villain in Manthara and created it successfully. Manthara will be pointed out as the first perfect female villain - intelligent, adamant, powerful and resourceful - in the history of Marathi dramas, and she will live till the language lives. This is his prime achievement and will not fail to strike even the foreign reader with wonder. Kirloskar had become a perfect dramatist, it seems, at the time of writing this drama, in which he has used his music to have the greatest force in fostering the sentiment, and various moods of his characters touching the very cores of the human heart. The sublime theme, the noble treatment, vivid imagery

and the dramatic merit in graphically depicting dignified characters make one feel that Kirloskar ought to have lived to complete this drama to astound the whole world ! And the feeling is deepened to find the serene atmosphere with which he had begun the fourth act with a happy, happy dialogue between the two divinities - Rama and Sita introduced anew.

Sangita Saubhadra

And now we turn to do justice to his original but finished product Sangita Saubhadra which he began to write in 1882 and finished the next year.

Title of the play : The title of the original play is Sangita Saubhadra as it's a play with songs (Sangita) - a musical play on the style of the opera. Saubhadra may be explained as the play with reference to Subhadra - sister of Lord Krishna. It deals with an important episode in her life - her nuptials. (Saubhadra is an abstract noun from Subhadra).

The title of the translation is Saubhadra, as many songs from the original have been rendered in prose. There are in all 95 songs. Almost all of them are sweet sounding melodies constructed in conformity with the Indian Ragas, but a vast majority of them only relate to some incident or the other, and as such have less poetic value, e. g., 'He creates first...fulfills Himself' (p. 3, ll. 9-13); 'please tell me his pedigree etc.' (ibid. ll. 27-29); bulk of the narration on pp. 6, 7; 'I am to attend the marriage etc.' p. 11; 'Tell them Their Lordships etc.' (p. 13, ll. 23-30), 'O Sanctifying Vamana-' (p. 15, end); 'Thousand and one imaginings -' (p. 40, ll. 13-19). But those that are sweeter in melody and superior in poetic value have not been lost sight of; they will be found translated in rhyme and rhythm. All the same, it was found essential that the translation should have a plain title Saubhadra.

Scene of the plays action : The scene of events in this play is Dwaraka.

No particular mention of the scene is observed in the original. The scenes are indicated, however, in speeches. It may, therefore, be obvious that—

ACT I is played in the forest of the Raivataka Mountain.

cf. '— keep a diligent watch over the Raivataka forest—' (p. 14, last line.)

'Arjuna. Whom are you calling...not to rude nature I suppose!' (p. 22, ll. 21, 22.)

ACT II takes place in the Royal Palace; but the place changes with events. The act opens with the drawing-hall of Krishna, where he reveals his plan when alone and holds conversation with Clown; but then the scene changes to Subhadra's boudoir.

cf. 'Warder:— His Majesty is bound to the Princess' chamber, and has ordered me to show Your Lordship thereto.'

'Krishna:— Well, dear comrade, I go there—' (p. 38, ll. 18, 19, 22).

Then the place of action, where Subhadra and Rukmini have a heart to heart talk, is the Tulasi-Vrindavana-court.

cf. 'Saranganayana:— Her Majesty...urged me to show Milady to the court of the Tulasi-Vrindavana —' p. 55-56 ll. 28 & 1. respectively.

ACT III is divided into two scenes (i) Krishna's chamber where he has a parley with Balarama. (ii) Rukmini's chamber—

cf. 'Krishna:— or shall I enjoy the charming association of Rukmini?— Oh, the latter for recreation!' (p. 74, ll. 25-27.)

ACT IV: the first action takes place probably in the vestibule of the inner apartment of Subhadra adjoining the garden. The second event is shown in Subhadra's chamber or boudoir, where Rukmini confounds Arjuna by her sudden threat to expose him (all in a joke); also.

cf. Arjuna:-'Subhadra ! this free disporting in the wood-land...cooped up in that boudoir of yours,-'

(p. 107, ll. 12-16).

ACT V begins in the woodland at the foot of the Raivataka, and is played until Arjuna proposes to mount up the top of the mountain-

cf. 'Arjuna. - if we were to mount the top of the Raivataka-'

(p. 110, ll. 9-12.)

Actions in the middle of the act take place near the cave, once hallowed by Arjuna himself.

cf. 'Arjuna. - the cave is just before you-'

(p. 116, ll. 24-25.)

The next locality appears to be Balarama's camp away from the foot of the mountain.

cf. Stage direction at the end of the page 125; also cf. -

'Servant. - Your Majesty will know that this garb...was found...at the foot of the mountain.... His Lordship ordered me ahead, and will follow me -' (p. 127, end.)

Although the drama is played at so many places and localities, the covering line for the whole exhibition of interests is Dwaraka. Every change is pre-informed with proper indication of the future topic and action. There is both clearness and continuity, spacing and speeding, and sequence and spectacle, in every effect.

Time analysis of the play : All events in the drama have happened in six months only - as the evening on which the drama opens is the last auspicious day in the month of Vaishakha for the celebration of nuptials before the commencement of Chaturmasya (cf. 'Krishna. - I was required to win over Shri Garga to fix up only the last date for marriage-' p. 30, ll. 24-26, Act III), and the morning on which Balarama gives Subhadra's hand in marriage to Arjuna is just after the end of the prohibitive

period in the month of Kartika, (cf. - 'Rukmini.- the Princess' marriage is now fixed for certain and the Lord Preceptor has asked to finish up with the rites ... only to-day.-' p. 99, ll. 11-15, Act IV: cf. also *ibid.* ll. 22-28; refer to the dialogue between Arjuna and Satyaki, p. 105: and also the closing speech of Arjuna at the end of Act IV, p. 136).

ACT I. - The total time taken by the happenings in this Act is not more than three hours. It is evening both from the consideration of the internal and external evidence. The external evidence is, that the auspicious time for the celebration of nuptials amongst the Kshatriyas is the Goraja Muhurta (time when the dust (raja) of the feet of cows (Go) is seen, i. e., evening when the cows return home from the pasture generally), as is even now chosen. As for the internal evidence : note the prologue- 'Sutradhara. - They have graced us for our performance' (p. 4, l. 9) and ' - I desire to produce one of his romantic plays Sangita Saubhadra, -. Do thou, O Love prepare for the same, please.' (*ibid.* ll. 19-22). and again Subhadra's narration of that evening's incidents to her friend Kusumavati, (cf. p. 49, ll. 16-25); both go to prove, that it was evening: Arjuna must have appeared on the scene some two hours before the demon bore Subhadra back to her boudoir at sunset, after bringing her to the notice of the hero for a while as advised by Lord Krishna. Krishna also says to Balarama in Act II, ' but she was unseen for full three hours ' (p. 39, l. 19); looking to actions of Arjuna, Narada, Ghatotkacha and Subhadra,

only two actions on the part of Arjuna, viz.-(a) Scuffle with the demon behind the curtain, and (b) search for water to treat Subhadra with, when she fainted, must have entailed some amount of time, still the extent of time required by them and the time taken up by the spoken word will not exceed three hours.

ACT II. Actions in this act have followed those in the first only a couple of days after. The sympathetic utterances regarding Subhadra's health by Kusumavati (cf. 'Don't augment the anguish, that is already corroding your health these two days.' p. 47, end; or 'when utter disappointment was staring...only two days ago,' p. 48, ll. 23-25) and by Rukmini (cf. 'How lamentably are you reduced, only in a couple of days!' p. 60, ll. 1-2.) bear out this statement. Now for its further justification: It will be seen that five moves have been suggested in Krishna's and Balarama's speeches in Act II.

- (i) 'the marriage-party of Duryodhana...made their way to Hastinapura, delighted at the mysterious restoration of Subhadra,' (cf. p. 31, ll. 8-10);
- (ii) The Yati (Arjuna) becomes tremendously famous, (cf. p. 33, ll. 9-20);
- (iii) Garga followed by a host of Brahmanas goes to the cave and supplicates the Yati, (cf. p. 34, ll. 1-8 and 16-19);
- (iv) Balarama's conference with Shri Garga over the accident of

Subhadra's disappearance, (cf. p. 40, end and p. 41 beginning);

- (v) Balarama's securing the Talisman and Tirtha (holy water) from Shri Garga as fetched by the latter from the Yati (cf. p. 42, ll. 17-22).

Reasonably it can be taken for granted that all these reported actions may well have taken place in the stated time. The only question of the tremendous fame of the Yati will try to disturb our understanding. But it may be satisfying when we find, that it is all a framed up affair by Krishna and Garga to illude Balarama, as no logic or reason would have prevailed upon to dissuade him to give up the cause of Duryodhana. The interval, therefore, between the first and the second act is two days and is sufficient to show further moves in the plot.

Actual events shown in this act begin from early morning and finish before the dining hour in the noon. The Act begins at about two hours after sunrise when Krishna is seen revolving over his plan, while waiting to see his elder brother Balarama, as is evident from his order to the warder, '-go to announce to us the Royal return, no sooner you know it, Chakradanda.' Vakratunda, the clown, then returns with the news of the tremendous fame of the Yati, and breaks it to Krishna. Immediately after this the Warder announces Balarama's return and direct visit to Subhadra. Krishna dismisses the clown and goes to Subhadra's chamber, where Balarama is cordially

enquiring after her health, to treat her with the Talisman and Tirthas. Krishna all the while pretends to do his brother's will. Krishna jokingly exasperates Subhadra a little. Balarama partly humoured by Krishna's joke, which he thinks was in favour of Duryodhana, and partly with the intention that their serious talk should not 'hang over and restrain her sport with loving friends', declares his idea to leave her and go with Krishna to pay a visit to the ascetic - Arjuna as advised by Shri Garga, and probably with the determination to bring the famous spirituality to the palace with due honour and in the state pomp and procession as the maid Saranganayana relates later on (cf. p. 56, ll. 22-24). They leave her, and go away. Then follows the touching conversation between Subhadra and her favourite friend Kusumavati in private, till Saranganayana re-appears with the message of Rukmini to the Princess to see her in the Tulasi-Vrindavana immediately after the bath. In the latter part of the Act, Rukmini and Subhadra meet and exchange thoughts. Subhadra entreats Rukmini to influence Krishna to make her happy by effecting her marriage with Arjuna any way, (cf. p. 63). Rukmini presses her to her bosom and assures her, that she shall not leave a single stone unturned to make her absolutely happy. The clown at the end, enters in haste and asks them to make haste and see His Holiness, who 'is waiting only to do justice to the



dishes before him.' and tells that the King-lord wants the Princess to offer him the Aposhana.' So both of them follow him.

All these events have followed each other in quick succession and naturally too, and the whole morning is enough to encompass them. That it's a morning time, needs no explanation. It is self-evident, from the references to the worship of the holy Basil (Tulasi) by Rukmini, to the Brahmana's early morning bath (cf. p. 58, Rukmini's part in the dialogue with the Clown).

ACT III. Actions in this act have immediately followed those in the previous one. The dinner has been referred to at the end of the second act, and the parties make their exit for the very purpose of paying homage to His Holiness - Arjuna. Subhadra was particularly appointed to offer the Aposhana to him at the commencement of the dinner. The act opens with the parley between Balarama and Krishna. And there is substantial ground to suppose that it must have been in the leisure hour after supper, for immediately after the parley Krishna proceeds to the 'Laxmi-Vilasa' - the Palace of Rukmini to recreate himself, (cf. p.74, ll. 24-26; and p. 75, ll. 6-7). The act ends at the next early morning (cf. p. 86, 'Hear you - this morning music?' and the concluding song 'Marching comes aurora bright:' p. 87.). In a very short span of twenty four hours, these two acts have been most artistically accommodated. The choice of time, viz. leisure after supper, for the opening of

the Act, is most conducive to the gravity of the situation created by Balarama's intention to entertain the ascetic - Arjuna - in the very inner apartment of Subhadra, - the situation that leads the plot to reach its climax afterwards. The dead hour of night, selected to disclose the secret to Rukmini in the latter half, is the most appropriate hour which reflects the sense and sensibility of the dramatist. Krishna gains Rukmini's confidence, and gains one more active sympathiser to conduct his plot further with free will and as effectively and ardently as he would have done himself.

ACT IV, which leads to the climax at its end, is played after a lapse of nearly six months or to be more exacting 187 days after Krishna has whispered the secret of Arjuna to Rukmini. The dramatist has so skilfully bridged the distance, that the spectator should feel, *prima facie*, that it is succeeding in earnest the dramatic whisper. He is not at fault; the dramatic virtue allures him. He is eager to know the whisper and its result, just as Rukmini is eager to see that 'sweet rogue' - Arjuna, (cf. p. 93, l. 6.). But it will definitely be a psychological mistake to believe, that the act has followed in quick succession, first because there is no suggestion to that effect at the end of the third act, where Rukmini only says, '— Prithee Lord, let me go. It is high time for my ablutions, and homage to my revered Parents-in-law.'; in the second place because of Krishna's caution to Rukmini not to allow the secret to

leak, and his subsequent words 'Your careful eye—', (cf. p. 86, l. 11), are enough to suppress Rukmini's enthusiasm; Rukmini is also sufficiently shrewd to realize the gravity of the affair; perhaps her own idea to indirectly help Arjuna to keep up his pretences, while living in the charming boudoir of Subhadra, intact, that none not even Subhadra herself should know him, must also have checked her enthusiasm; in the third instance: sufficient time must also have been allowed to disgust the maids with His Holiness's whims and caprices, as also to make Subhadra confident of sure pleasure while in the vicinity of His Holiness, or to embolden her to proclaim in answer to the exasperating words of Rukmini 'to have faith at least in His Holiness' that he may at least lift her up and fulfil her yearnings,—“that ever if anything helps me to emancipate myself from the abominable miseries of this life, it's the merit and merit alone of my piety to His Holiness and not the vain flattery of ye mortals.”, (cf. p. 92, ll. 12-17); fourth: because of the actual reference, “that this Chaturmasya is to end soon...” (cf. Subhadra, p. 89, ll. 15-17), and last but not least, on account of reference to the conclusion of the Chaturmasya, (cf. Rukmini: 'Besides the Sun enters the new sign tomorrow.....with due completion of his chaturmasya...' p. 99, ll. 21-27). The interval, therefore, between the occurrences in the third and the fourth act is nearly six months.

The actual time covered by the

incidents in this act is from early morning to the noon at the most; the incidents are: Subhadra's remonstrance to Kusumavati, whom she supposed to be lingering outside with flowers in order to have a chat with Saranganayana, instead of holding everything in readiness to worship His Holiness in her apartment; next, serious dialogue tinged with robust humour of Rukmini between herself and the heroine and the latter's exit while in anger; then the mental worship of Subhadra by Arjuna; and then meeting of Arjuna and Rukmini, in which the secret is out, and in which Rukmini whispers in her turn the way, Arjuna should adopt to free himself from all the bother; and last, Satyaki's deliverance of Balarama's message, (cf. Satyaki, p. 105, ll. 5-17). They all follow each other in quick succession and in a natural sequence. Arjuna rises up for his 'noon ablutions' after instructing the maid to prepare for the same. And immediately after, drops a lively hint as to what he would do the next morning, when—

ACT V begins in a woodland at the foot of the mountain Raivataka and Arjuna sings 'Gone, are all the planets gone', (cf. p. 109, end), Subhadra following his suit by describing the bracing atmosphere of the morn by saying:—"And wood-land breeze doth coolly blow," etc. Thus begun at the early hour of the morn, all spectacular events solving the various mysteries till Balarama himself offers Subhadra in marriage to Arjuna, and the couple is

blessed by all, the drama finishes within two hour's time.

The above analysis of time will show, that every act is finished individually in reasonable time. Where the length of time was required to be bridged over it has been done skilfully on psychological grounds by showing vivid change in the attitude of characters. In brief it may be said, that it is a harmonious whole from the consideration of the time-element.

Main source of the play : Almost all plays, that are written with reference to topics from mythology can be traced to the great Indian epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. The present one we come across in Mahabharata. In Adiparva, there is a detailed account of Arjuna's pilgrimages to various holy places, while he went in exile on account of the involuntary transgression of the precepts laid down by Sage Narada, (cf. Vanavasaparva, Adhyaya 213, verse 35). In the same chapter on the exile, is given the cause of Arjuna's involuntary transgression of Narada's precepts. Arjuna was required to go to the armoury to equip himself with arms in order to rescue the stolen cows of a Brahmana (Adhyaya 213, verses 1-25). The same incident is given as a part of Krishna's plan in this drama (cf. p. 30, ll. 11-15). If Skandapurana is gone through, one will find this topic (cf. Vaishnavakhanda Part II, Venkatachala Mahatmya, Adhyaya 29, verses 14-21). His stay at the Raivataka has been detailed with a graphic description of Krishna's hospitality, (cf. Adiparva, Adhyaya 218, verses 8-15). Then follows Arjuna's sojourn in Dwaraka (ibid. vv. 16-21). The episode of 'Subhadra-harana' comes next, (cf. ibid Adhyayas 219-20). Briefly the story in Mahabharata is as follows :

Pandavas built for themselves a new capital Indraprastha after Arjuna won Draupadi at her Svayamvara. They were happily ruling there. With regard to Draupadi, they strictly followed the

precepts of Sage Narada. While they lead such a pious life, once a Brahmana came crying for his cows, which were just then stolen and carried away by thieves. Taking pity on him, and as his prime duty, Arjuna consoled him with an assurance of rescuing them, and went to the armoury for arms. There he found Dharma and Draupadi together; but he could not return without arms and depart from his duty as a Kshatriya. He, therefore, determined to go to the armoury, equip himself and set on the trail of the thieves. He did so; rescued the cows, restored them to the Brahmana-owner; and taking leave of Dharma set on pilgrimage, in order to expiate the sin of having involuntarily seen and Draupadi Dharma together.

During the period of exile, he happened to visit Tirthas (holy places) in the West after finishing the Eastern ones; he thus had arrived at Prabhasa, where Krishna met him. Krishna brought him to stay at the Mountain Raivataka. He cordially treated him there for some days and afterwards took him to Dwaraka with great honour.

Arjuna lived at Dwaraka for several days. While passing time thus, himself together with Krishna went to enjoy the Raivataka-festival, which was an annual fixture of the religiously minded Yadavas. Almost all relatives and other dignitaries with their paraphernalia, and host of Gandharvas were present at the festival. Roaming in company with Krishna, Arjuna saw lovely Subhadra and fell in love with her. Krishna even by a guess could realize that Arjuna was disturbed in his mind at the very sight of his charming sister, and asked him whether he desired to marry her so that the consent of the elders will be taken. He also suggested that there are only two ways of marriage open for a Kshatriya—either win the bride at her Svayamvara, if fixed, or snatch her away perforce, if otherwise. Arjuna left the decision to the advice of Krishna. The latter hinted at the second procedure,

in this instance, as there was no definite plan of her Svayamvara, and a word was sent to Dharma about this plan, for sanction. On receiving the desired consent, and in proper consultation with Krishna, Arjuna set out of Dwaraka in a brilliant chariot of Krishna himself under the pretext of a hunt, and locating Subhadra, who was on her way home after the worship of the Raivataka mountain, he directed his chariot towards her in hot speed, picked her up and made for Indraprastha - his capital. There was a great excitement at this news in Dwaraka, and exasperation of Balarama knew no bounds. Immediately he ordered his army to yoke up their chariots and pursue Arjuna ere long and rescue Subhadra. Himself, burning as if with anger, was about to lead them, and would surely have overtaken his enemy but for the timely intimidations of Lord Krishna. The Lord pacified his wrath by wisdom, and by convincing him, that what had happened was in the fitness of things. Balarama, thus quieted and satisfied, went with Krishna to Indraprastha to honour Arjuna and bring the couple back to Dwaraka to solemnize the nuptials in their proper form.

This romantic theme of the marriage of Subhadra was handled twice by two dramatists living in different ages before Mr. Kirloskar. The first was written by King Shahaji of Tanjore sometime between 1682 to 1711 A.D. ... In the book of his drama 'Ganga-Kaveri-Samvada' there is a mention of 'Subhadra-Kalyana' as written by him (cf. Dr. Y. G. Lele, *Yakshagana - Bhagavata Nataka*, Chapter II, p. 19). The drama unfortunately is not available at present; and nothing can be said of its merits or influence on Mr. Kirloskar. Another work that affords opportunity of comparative study is M. V. Kelkar's 'Subhadra - Harana' (Rape of Subhadra), written in 1879. But before comparing these two works let us deal with the story of Subhadra as dramatised by Kirloskar. He presents—

Act I. Faring in his pilgrimage, Arjuna reaches Dwaraka and learns about Subhadra's - his beloved's marriage with Duryodhana. He is enraged at the breach of the promise of her betrothal to himself. He disbelieves the rumour.

But he meets Sage Narada on the way, who confirms the news. The marriage was to take place the same evening. Arjuna is mortally disappointed all the more when Narada tells him, that Krishna gave up his cause in consideration of the imperial wealth of Duryodhana. Arjuna is bent upon committing suicide. Narada dissuades him from that, but suggests to take recourse to Tridandi - Sanyasa, which is as good as death to a warrior, and which as the popular notion goes also leaves scope for one to lead marital life again, if one so desires. Arjuna agrees.

Just then they hear a clamour, that Subhadra has suddenly disappeared at the nick of time of her marriage, and that she is being searched in the forest of the Raivataka Mountain as everywhere else.

Arjuna's hopes sprout again. He tells Narada, that he intended to search her out himself. Narada consents, once again reminding him of Sanyasa provided he is not lucky to find her. They depart.

Arjuna is moving in the thick of the forest, when a demon appears with Subhadra, spell-bound on his shoulders. Keeping her down, the savage withdraws his spells. Subhadra begins to recover, when the demon pounces upon the 'kidnapped', as he says, to enjoy the fruit of his long endeavours; but Arjuna intervenes, and with a dash pushes the demon aside and far out of sight of Subhadra. The demon disappears when Arjuna is about to kill him. The discomfited hero returns to the spot - all besmeared with blood, and stands aside listening to her talks to herself. He is overjoyed to hear her say, that she won't budge an

inch from putting an end to her life, if she were forced to marry anybody else than Arjuna himself.

This is an opportunity for him to reveal and bear away his sweetheart. He does not seize it for want of his eldest brother's consent to contract enmity with the Yadavas, which was involved in bearing her away. He waits now only to help her out of the forest.

Subhadra is unbosoming her heart, delighted at the seclusion, which was long denied to her. She feels the fall of the day, and calls on her maids. Here Arjuna, without fear of being recognized by her, comes forward in the manner of a wayfarer, and tells her, that she was in a dreadful forest. Subhadra becomes nervous and faints at the idea, that she will be accused by her relatives for having purposely avoided the marriage this way. Arjuna tries to comfort and console her, but finds her speechless. Covering her with the shawl - her own present to him as a token of love, he goes to fetch some water to treat her with.

In his briefest absence the demon re-appears, spells Subhadra again, takes out the necklace from her person and a letter given by Krishna, puts both of them in a purse, leaves it there and takes away Subhadra to her own boudoir as instructed by Krishna.

Arjuna hurries back and is non-plussed at the mysterious disappearance of his beloved. He now takes her as completely lost to him. He is so humbled with grief, that he once thinks that she had better married Duryodhana and lived so that he might have gladdened his eye at least by her sight. Determinately he moves to take to Sanyasa, when he sees the purse and opens it. He finds the necklace which he instantly recognizes as his lively present to Subhadra in return of her implicit love to him, while they lived together in Dwaraka. The letter, couched in her hand is addressed to him. He is glad to infer, that she had planned to

send that love-message and would have conveyed it, but for the master's episode. In the letter he is asked to be rather a Sanyasin and make her a serving nun by his side than be a passive pilgrim, seeing his own wife used by the adversary. This was a killing dart. But he is helpless, and has the only go of Sanyasa before him. He vows to become a Sanyasin - using the letter as a holy scripture and the necklace for the rosary.

(The position at the end of this act is : Arjuna knows, that he is given up by Krishna, while the latter has tried, through the demon, to contrive disappearance of Subhadra from her boudoir to forest and vice versa, first to frustrate the marriage and then to disappoint Arjuna completely. Arjuna takes Subhadra to be lost for good. But she is safe. Narada suggests the course of Sanyasa to Arjuna, and Krishna rivets his mind on it by the message in the letter, which Arjuna supposes to have been sent by Subhadra - his devoted beloved, as a part of her plan. Arjuna vows Sanyasa.)

Act II. In his palace, Krishna is anxiously waiting for his clown, whom he has sent to see how far Arjuna has achieved fame and has become popular. That is the immediate information he wants, after knowing for certain that Arjuna is hallowing the cave in the Raivataka Mountain as a Sanyasin. This is Krishna's first achievement, in his scheme: (1) To subject Arjuna to exile and subsequently to Sanyasa through Narada, with the intention to avoid a rash out-break of war between the Yadavas and the Pandavas on account of his elder brother's obstinacy in offering Subhadra to Duryodhana, inspite of her pledge to love Arjuna. (2) To win over Garga to appoint only the last auspicious day for marriage before Chaturmasya. (3) To employ the related demon to carry away Subhadra just before the time of the marriage in a miraculous manner and thus frustrate the settled marriage. He is revealing the

scheme, when Clown appears and tells him that the Sanyasin has attained immense popularity, and that Preceptor Garga has personally contributed to it by supplicating the ascetic in the presence of a number of Brahmanas. Krishna is delighted at the idea, that his brother now would soon take fancy for him. And as the party of Duryodhana had gone away, and there was ample time of four months at least before the marriage season, he has to worry about nothing else. He, therefore, moves to Subhadra's chamber to enquire after her health.

He meets Balarama there with a Talisman and Tirtha (holy water) secured by Garga from some ascetic of tremendous spiritual power, as the latter puts it, by the merit of which Subhadra will improve her health rapidly. Balarama is waiting for Subhadra to wake up; Krishna asks the attendants to wake her up. Subhadra wakes with utterances, 'Where's that knight in blood-stained clothes?'. Krishna asks her to take heart, and tries to console that she will surely be the crowned queen of Duryodhana after four months and will humble them. He apparently wins Balarama's sympathy, but vexes Subhadra the more. She pretends severe headache, which she would not like to survive even. Krishna asks Balarama to hurry up those spiritual applications that she gets some timely relief. Balarama does so, and consoles Subhadra sincerely. He tells Krishna that they will make an immediate move to pay a visit and homage to the said ascetic. Krishna hesitates, but when it is told that the preceptor has ordered him to do so, he meekly and gratefully submits and accompanies his brother.

Subhadra is left to her maid, who tries to console and comfort her mistress and mitigate her anguish by diverting her mind to various soothing sorts. Subhadra has no mind for anything, even for her life, and hence asks her friend to give her poison and relieve her from all the miseries of living.

without a sympathiser even. The maid is at a loss to amuse her. Subhadra's grief is surging higher and higher. But when she receives a word from Rukmini - wife of Krishna - expecting her in the Tulasi Court-yard, immediately after bath, and in holy attires probably to pay homage to the ascetic, who has been brought to the palace in the state pomp and procession. Subhadra is glad to find, that she is not altogether left in the basket by Rukmini. She proceeds to take bath.

In the Tulasi Court-yard Subhadra and Rukmini meet. Subhadra entreats her to persuade Krishna to find out Arjuna and bring about her marriage with him. That's her only desire, but for the fulfilment of which she won't live alive. Rukmini promises her to see through the matter to fulfil her yearning. They are informed just then, that the ascetic was only waiting to do justice to the dishes before him and it was high time that both of them were there, when Balarama especially insists on Subhadra's offering the Aposhana to the ascetic to begin with the meals. They instantly follow the message.

(Fuller revelation of Krishna's scheme to bring about Subhadra's marriage with Arjuna, without arousing suspicion in Balarama's mind; Arjuna's stay as an ascetic in the cave in the Raivataka Mountain; Balarama's taking fancy for him: Rukmini and Subhadra's ignorance about the moves of Krishna; Subhadra's courting favour of Rukmini to persuade Krishna to find out Arjuna; and Rukmini's candid assurance to see through things towards Subhadra's happiness; - these are the striking features of this Act.)

Act III. At the palace, in the chamber of Krishna, the same night after the dinner to the ascetic, Balarama meets Krishna for consultation over the ascetic's entertainment in the palace - in the very apartment of Subhadra. Balarama holds the ascetic as an ideal one and expresses his earnest

desire to induce him to stay at Subhadra's, and receive her personal services, (as a religious vow of Chaturmasya), so that her present temperament would soften to accord her hearty assent to their proposal of her marriage with Duryodhana. Krishna dissents from his brother saying, that his idol was no better than a mere fungus of asceticism, indiscreet, fickle and shameless; and that to allow him to be in constant company with Subhadra would be as good as leaving the treasury in the custody of a thief. Balarama scathes Krishna with a retort, that it is beyond the ken of thieves and paramours to perceive, that there breathe under the sun people that scoff at wealth and the woman. Krishna persists, that it is every way unwise to allow young Subhadra to be in the constant communion with a young man, may he be an ascetic. Balarama obstinately resolves to do what he thinks fit. Krishna warns him, that he will not remain responsible for any mishap accruing from such an unlaudable move of his brother.

(The interest of this colourful medley is: Balarama will never suspect the credentials of the ascetic. He is ardent about Subhadra's marriage with Duryodhana and wants her cordial consent. Krishna will not be suspected by Balarama as responsible for the happy end, that the latter would misconstrue as a mishap.)

Now follows the romantic parley in Rukmini's boudoir. Krishna, thinking that his scheme is almost successful, has come to Rukmini's for his well-earned rest, but finds her lulled to sleep. The attending maid wakes her up to receive a chiding. But on seeing Krishna, Rukmini becomes embarrassed with blushes. She finds Krishna in a very happy mood and opens the topic of Subhadra's marriage. Krishna poses that whole of the responsibility has been shared entirely by Balarama; and that he wants none to poke nose in his affairs; neither, therefore, herself nor himself - nay even Subhadra should

bother about it; everything will come off well in good time. Rukmini pleads on behalf of Subhadra, that her choice must be regarded; if her choice is disregarded and our choice were to be ruthlessly inflicted on her, she will put an end to her life; and then Krishna's reputation will be maligned not Balarama's. Krishna first tries to hush her up by asking to stop all such nonsensical bragging, and desist from breeding any discontent among himself and his loving brother thereby. But he soon finds, that she has become righteously indignant at such bullying. Thinking it advisable to take her in confidence, he whispers the secret of his scheme to her great astonishment.

(At the end of this romantic parley, Krishna has won over to his side a most powerful, graceful and faithful party in Rukmini, by disclosing the secret to her, and diverts interest on her actions in future.)

Act IV. Full six months after, in the vicinity of Subhadra's apartment, Subhadra and Rukmini meet. Subhadra asks whether anything was done in the matter of the promised persuasion of Krishna. Rukmini gives a bluff, that Krishna dismissed her with a hideous retort, that puzzled her to shame and to keep quiet. Subhadra is heavily disappointed to find that, Krishna in whom she had centered all hopes of becoming happy, is not even prepared to give a thought to her wish, expressed through his own wife. She expressly says, that none of them wanted to help her. Rukmini smartly suggests, that it would be well for Subhadra now to fix all her hopes in the ascetic, to whom she was all the while according her devoted services, and pray him to help her either by finding out Arjuna or by marrying her himself. Subhadra indignantly goes away, thus giving ground for Rukmini's own amusement.

(The secret is well guarded. Subhadra has become completely nervous. She is taking Arjuna

as a spiritual dignity, her piety to whom is her last prop as she does not get the desired sympathy and help of Krishna. The drama is advancing towards the climax in this scene.)

Rukmini has now come to see the ascetic in the boudoir of Subhadra. He has finished his romantic meditation, so seriously avowed by him at the end of the first act, and has just hoisted his signal 'Narayana, Narayana!' for Subhadra to come. But first the approaching maids disappoint, and next Rukmini confronts him with her 'heralding tongue' as he says. Rukmini asks the maids to go away immediately to help their Princess, who is detained by the Royal Mother to undergo some ceremonials prior to the marriage feast, and she will have to attend to some rites, being performed by order of the Lord Preceptor, as all would be leaving tomorrow for Hastinapura, where their Princess and King Duryodhana will enter into the wed-lock. The maids would be glad to go away provided there was somebody to attend to the ascetic. Rukmini undertakes the job and relieves the maids, who go away.

Rukmini approaches Arjuna with hands joined in supplication and waits for an order. Arjuna is so exasperated, that he asks her to go away, lest he pulls out her tongue to cut into pieces. From his very vehemence Rukmini comes to know him as Arjuna. She is in such a delightful mood, that she feels like incensing him a little more. She threatens him to confess whoever he may really be, or else he will be immediately reported and exposed to shame. Arjuna realizes the blunder he has committed, and falls prostrate at her feet and implores for her assurance to protect him. Rukmini gracefully consoles him and assures, that he is quite safe. She then reveals to him the way to be out of that miserable restriction by whispering to him her husband's plan. And as a maid just then appears to

announce Satyaki's visit, Rukmini departs with a ceremonious obeisance to Arjuna.

Immediately after, Satyaki the Commander-in-Chief of the Yadavas delivers Balarama's message, that they were all to go tomorrow for the Sea-ablutions and feast in the Royal forest under the auspices of the Maha-parvati, and that according to His Holiness's choice, arrangements will be made within or without home for the personal attendance of the Princess as usual. Arjuna is overjoyed at the opportunity he is getting to be out of the palace with Subhadra. He readily prefers to accompany them all, provided he is not disturbed by the contact of the mob. The C-in-C, agrees to take that responsibility on himself. Arjuna decides to go with them. Satyaki goes away with a bow.

Arjuna then declares that tomorrow morning he will throw off his vermilion garb, and if time comes he will smash the whole army of the Yadavas as easily as he would a slight fly. He has gained strength.

(This act is the most important one: The story reaches its climax by offering Arjuna an excellent opportunity to be free to elope with Subhadra. The climax is heightened by Subhadra's total ignorance about the affair. The complete humiliation of Arjuna before Rukmini - a warrior brought to her feet by a woman - provides a spectacular background to the climax, suggesting the happy end.)

Act V. In the wood-land, by the sea-shore, Arjuna and Subhadra are freely disporting, and ventilating their poetic conceits. Arjuna proposes to ascend the mountain top and enjoy the better prospect of the beach, bedecked with gallant citizens of Dwaraka in the ceremonial dress and decorations. Subhadra agrees to follow him on a condition, that she should be shown the cave, once hallowed by His Holiness. They both ascend. And after enjoying the bird's eye view, Subhadra asks the ascetic the reason for his renunciation in young age. Arjuna

reveals the facts and himself too, and weds her, swearing all the Elements as witnesses to their marriage. Krishna appears there and tells how he was glad to find his scheme thus glorified. Arjuna and Subhadra both are overwhelmed by his obligations, particularly because both of them had clearly doubted his sincerity and sympathy; but Krishna asks them to follow him only without fear of Balarama, of whom Subhadra was terribly afraid. Krishna goes ahead.

A tumultuous clamour is heard, that the ascetic eloped with the Princess. Balarama's indignation knows no bounds. Krishna pretends to learn the reason of the turmoil. Balarama tells him what had happened. Krishna slights it as a foregone conclusion. Finding his brother pecking at his weak point, Balarama becomes extremely nervous; but in the meanwhile the news is received, that the Princess is rescued by a heroic prince, probably by Duryodhana. Balarama is enraptured and enthusiastically declares, that the rescuer will get Subhadra in marriage, whosoever he may be. To his disgust, he actually finds him to be Arjuna. Indignant at the trickery, he flourishes his mace to kill Arjuna on the spot. Garga just then appears and intervenes. Balarama is asked by him not only to desist from such a rash and foolish action, but reconciled to offer Subhadra to Arjuna, as both of them were fitting and the only match to each other. Balarama does so instantaneously.

Considering the whole structure of the play, it will be noted how skilfully has Kirloskar presented the little episode from Mahabharata. It will be worthwhile now to compare this drama with that of M. V. Kelkar's (Rape of Subhadra).

Comparison: Subhadra's attempt to secure sympathetic help of her brother Krishna, through his wife Rukmini; Balarama's glamour for the Ascetic - Arjuna, and in contrast Krishna's pretended censure of the ascetic, are the only points

of comparison (cf. V. P. Dandekar, *Marathi Natyasrishti*, Part I, Pauranic Nataka, p. 196. ll. 10-11.).

Contrast. -

Kelkar.

- (i) Rustic clown with his silly and wild cracks plays the rôle which has no bearing on the play.
- (ii) Ganapati and Sarasvati are retained, but they speak in Sanskrit.
- (iii) Musical verses at the most are found.
- (iv) Humour is flat, a mere irrelevant quibble on words.

Kirloskar.

- (i) Clown presented is the trusted friend of Krishna, and plays a useful rôle - short but well connected with the plot.
- (ii) They are replaced by Narada and Sutradhara, the former playing an important part, the latter reflecting the plot in the prologue.
- (iii) There are songs set to scientific Ragas, bringing the play to the style of European Opera.
- (iv) Humour is created by contradictory situations and sentiments; sympathetic, ludicrous but never ridiculous. It is essentially relevant and sublime.

- (v) Unwildy, it details even incidents in the life of Arjuna before his marriage with Subhadra : Arjuna - Chitrangada - marriage is an instance.
- (v) The plot concentrates only on the episode of the marriage of Subhadra.
- (vi) The drama is divided into three parts; every part is divided into offices (Kacheris), e. g. there are twelve Kacheris in the second part; Vidushaka arranges all of them on the stage.
- (vi) The play is well regulated in precise Acts and scenes. Vidushaka or clown plays his rôle only; he has got no work of stage or theatre-management.
- (vii) There is no Narada to direct Arjuna to Sanyasa : Krishna himself gives that direction.
- (vii) Narada is specially introduced for the purpose.
- viii) The style, dialogue and characterization are unnatural for the most part.
- (viii) They are most natural with the uniform touch of humanity.

(cf. *ibid.*, p. 130-31 and 195-96.)

In consideration of the respective structures of the play, and the vast improvements he has made over the episode in Mahabharata, one will ungrudgingly and unhasitatingly say that Kirloskar claims originality by right and title. There is another drama, viz. "Tridandi Sanyasa", written by K. P. Khadilkar in the year 1936, on the same

topic. But the story has been mixed up with the theory of social fast and etc., and has been so mystified that it becomes for the most part boring and at times unintelligible. One may, therefore, find with all regard to that work of art of the greatest of the Maharashtrian dramatists of the Twentieth century, that Sangita Saubhadra of Kirloskar still stands superb by its elegance and appeal.

Some characteristics of the play. All along these sixty and odd years, this play has been estimated by various critics as the first and one of the most delightful comedies in Marathi. It creates sweet and pleasant atmosphere, in which one would be glad to be absorbed. "There is little satire and no spleen." Even for the discomfited, e. g. Balarama (at the end), Arjuna (first and fourth Act.), the spectator will not bear any ill-will. The dramatist is very happy in his choice of the material and its judicious use. Although Kirloskar invariably chooses subjects from Mythology, his characters appear to have been drawn from life. Without hankering after ideals, he gives us in divinities real living men and women, only distinguishing them from the ordinary by the luming hallow of the supernatural, very sparingly used, e. g. miraculous disappearance of Subhadra, contrived by the demon.

Delightful humour animates the scenes where Arjuna is tricked by Narada, Balarama by Krishna (in the second and the third act), Subhadra and Arjuna (in the fourth) by Rukmini, and again Balarama by Krishna at the end of the drama. There is spreading of romance and humour in the quickening dialogue between Krishna and Rukmini, in the latter part of the third act, and in the pleasantries in the conversation between Arjuna and Subhadra in the beginning of the last act. But above all these, the 'romantic' vow, which Arjuna takes at the end of the

first Act, 'I swear to be a mendicant, counting beads of this rosary in your name, and citing this epistle in the spirit of a holy scripture.', strikes as the best illustration. Irony and humour are obvious in the forest scene in the first act, where Arjuna himself keeps his sweet-heart in the dark about his own identity, or regarding the monstrous episode of her being carried into the wilderness; and in Subhadra's reflections over the insipidity of 'the Shawl', that had miserably fallen from the elevation given to it by herself, (Act II).

Along with humour, the prevailing mood of Saubhadra is "Romanic". The incidents such as we see, e. g. Balarama's blind faith in the ascetic and his spiritual powers, the vow of Sanyasa by the foremost of warriors - Arjuna, utter humiliation of the vain-glorious before an intelligent woman (Arjuna - Rukmini in the middle of Act IV.) and etc. appear to be common when thought of individually, but collectively taken they at once assume the touch of improbability. There is created that delicate struggle between the probable and the improbable in our mind, that wavers with the sense of the indefiniteness about the nature of the occurrences. In this sense this play is romantic.

Action dominates this drama throughout, especially because the gallant hero is stunned at the very outset by an adverse rumour, subsequently confirmed as a fact by Narada - the circumstance which forces him to become a passive Sanyasin. This incident itself is sufficient to create interest in the story and divert our attention to future moves from the very beginning of the play. Our attention is held upto the end by what happens.

In all plays of Kirloskar, characterisation is a great feature. This topic will be separately dealt with later.

Saubhadra stands unrivalled among Marathi dramas both for its execution and design, which is

complete and uniform. What his biographer said of his writing of Rama-Rajya-Viyoga is also true of Saubhadra. The design of the plot seems to have been struck at a stroke. It is neither wanting in any detail, nor is it laden with superfluities. Each part has been assembled in its proper place, all together presenting a harmonious whole. All situations tend to march towards the final development. Interests never flag or divert attention from the central theme. The movement of the play is very rapid. Characterization is bound to keep pace with it. Characters, therefore, are painted in broad touches. The Dramatis Personae are all kindly, even the demon is not an exception, and all are imbued with the spirit that is cordial and cheerful.

All these fineries have been conveyed in smooth and simple diction, that is animating in the serious scenes, and amusing in lighter ones as is obvious in the dialogue between Balarama and Krishna, and between Arjuna and Subhadra respectively. The diction is appropriately expressive of the sublime spirit of the romance and noble sentiments, whether couched in prose or music. There is poetic grace, embellished with rich imagination and lofty ideas, nowhere marred by false taste or ostentation. The style has its full share of allusions and illustrations.

The Characters of the play The heroine is Subhadra, since her marriage with Arjuna is the main topic of the play. She registers well on account of her loyal and true love. She is graceful. She has hazarded by pledging her love to Arjuna against the will of Balarama, who is the sole authority. Our sympathies, hence, are mainly concentrated on her. She is made to face heavy odds - her lover himself taking a wayward fancy for pilgrimage; Krishna notoriously keeping silent from her view-point; Rukmini allowing her to grope in the dark. Her only solace is the heart-felt sympathy of her parents, who are utterly helpless due to their

old age. She herself is too tender to steer the course through difficulties. She almost breaks under the heavy grief of separation and at last begs her own maid to give her some poison, so that she may emancipate herself from the abominable miseries of the unsympathetic world. There is smartness in her persuasion, as is obvious in her conversation with Rukmini- (Act II). Her delicate feelings and righteousness are evidenced remarkably by her abuse of the 'shawl' (Act II), and censure levelled against Rukmini (cf. 'I do not want an unscrupulous kindred to hint at a Divinity', 'If any thing ever helps me, . . . my piety to his Holiness and not the vain flattery of ye mortals.,' 'don't make a show of your imprudence. I am really ashamed to call you my sister.' Act IV). She is modest, (cf. 'Subhadra. . . I must, however, allow these nicities to them - the elders.' Act II, p. 45.). This quality is even more striking in the last act when she and her lover, whom she has almost recognized, are together alone at the entrance of the cave. The way in which she brings out the identity of Arjuna, so far kept concealed from her by himself and by her brother and his wife, is not simply charming, but it is a glorious example of her cleverness and character. She is a sincere and an accomplished lady. She loves, and is loved by the people. And the spectator also thinks of Subhadra first and foremost.

Rukmini. She is a vivacious, charming and dignified specimen of womanhood. She is capable of controlling everybody: Subhadra honours and follows her word instantaneously; Krishna is forced to submit the secret; Arjuna seeks her protection. She controls, because she at once creates confidence in the minds of others. In contrast with Subhadra, she has a buoyant vitality of spirit, ready wit and force of will. She is extremely loving and true to her promise to Subhadra (Cf. 'I will not leave a single stone unturned,' Act II, p. 63, l. 28.); to Krishna

(cf. Act III, p. 86, l. 2.); and to Arjuna (cf. ' Take my word for that, brother. Be bold ! I wonder how you think of my being the cause of your shame ; ' Act IV, p. 102. l. 1-3.). It seems that she rules and directs with ease and discretion. She is pious and dutiful, (cf. Act III, p. 85. ll. 29-30.). In her, Kirloskar has depicted a charming and awe-inspiring noble lady.

Kusumavati. A maid, but a trusted friend of Subhadra. She is sharp and sympathetic, loving and true. She boldly speaks before Balarama and Krishna, unlike Saranganayana. She is wise to reconcile herself to her lot, (cf. Act IV, p. 89, ll. 5-6). She is modest; but she is corrective from the view point of Saranganayana - her colleague.

Saranganayana. She is dull, ungraceful, and is suspected and hated by Subhadra.

Arjuna. Arjuna is a great hero. He is dutiful; suffering but never swerving. He has high respect for his eldest brother - Dharmaraja, and is neither prepared to transgress his word nor do anything without his consent (cf. Act I, p. 21, ll. 10-12).

He is 'valiant,
And in dimension and the shape of nature
A gracious person. '

He makes even Krishna feel so. He is courteous and an intense lover. He hates the unrighteous. His feelings are genuine: ' Fie, fie on you, you wretched descendent of Bharata ! How dare you name that blind man's son, instead of this mighty Dhananjaya ! ' His love to Subhadra is genuine: ' you better had diverted to woo Duryodhana, and saved your life, that I may have consoled myself with your sight at least ! ' (cf. also p. 27, ll. 24-32.) He is highly sentimental (cf. p. 13 ll. 1-9, 17-21, 23-30.). He is seen doing little, because he is made to take

the vow of Sanyasa, and has to ply on the rôle talking most beautifully and poetically winning sympathies whenever, he appears later on, by his restlessness to seek the first opportunity to throw off that loathsome garb of an ascetic, and risk to contract enmity even with the Yadavas. It is apparent in the sudden outburst of his feeling: 'For every reason on earth! I am a lion, not born to see a fox taking away my own prize! You are blessed that I have not pulled out your tongue, and cut it into pieces for such a mean bragging.' Still there is not evident the slightest tinge of self-conceit, or of cowardice. He is brave but not a bravado. He highly contributes to the 'romantic' spirit of the play.

Krishna. Here is a fine specimen of the craft of a dramatist, in as much as a Divinity is transformed into a living person. In mythology we find Krishna raised to be the Supreme Spirit - omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. Kirloskar, however, presents Him as an ideal human being. He is endowed with all noble qualities. He does not mock or hate his brother against whom he is planning. He is all along conscious that it was a sin to plan against a 'matchless nobility on earth.' Always he says in an apologetic tone that 'End will justify the means.' Balarama is elder than himself. He does not, therefore, choose to act in direct contravention to his brother's wish, but wisely seeks his preceptor's help to influence Balarama, and make him offer Subhadra to Arjuna, in proper fitness of things. He is glad to give credit to other persons such as Garga, Rukmini, Satyaki. This mood of resignation is heightened when we observe that he meets Arjuna or Subhadra only once in the fifth Act, to solve the mystery of 'the letter', and when Subhadra says, 'I have no words to thank my noblest Krishna!' he only caresses and wipes out her tears with words, 'Forget it, Dear. I did my duty

and verily in my own cause. Please don't mention it.' He is sure of Arjuna's prowess; but he does not leave him and Subhadra to themselves but arranges immediately for their protection, and is present with them till the time of 'achievement', i. e. Balarama's offering of Subhadra to Arjuna, to avert catastrophe himself, if there were any. He has schemed but wisely and for the well-fare of all.

He is extremely loving and loyal whether to his wife or to his dear ones and friends. He is kind, and regards sentiments of other people. He is always found to be in good humour, and humours those that approach him - right up from Clown to King. He cuts jokes, but they are always lively, and only disclose the intensity of feelings of their victims'. He is seen always fond of fun and devises comic situations: e. g. his meeting with Balarama, in the beginning of the third Act, and in the last one; his meeting with Rukmini in the second half of Act III. Rukmini alone outwits his cunningness by her admirable boldness, bringing matters to the crisis between them. Balarama gives way before him at the end, although in their first parley, Krishna is practically vanquished in argument. But where-soever he creates a critical situation, he gives it a lively turn. Grateful and genial in spirit, extremely discrete, appealing to reason, Krishna is in short a 'Beau Ideal' of humanity.

Balarama. He is generous and religiously minded. He is obstinate but true to his promise. Subhadra's love to Arjuna, or her suffering which makes her sick of life is nothing to him; still he is kind to her, and is anxious about her health in as much as he finds out remedies for her immediate relief; he is very anxious to see, that 'her temperament softens, and her reason cultivates to accord her hearty consent to our proposal of her marriage with Duryodhana.', and is even prepared to induce an ascetic of the supposed spiritual powers to come

and stay in her apartment, to be served by herself. He is a monument of 'blind faith'. He evidently judges others by his own lofty standards and finds Krishna wanting in that respect, (cf. p. 73 ll. 19-25). He is the villain, the antagonist in the play. But his villainy is only the out-come of his sincere love for his disciple Duryodhana. He is adamant in this respect, and his self-conceit and vanity give a high colour to his portrait as a villain. He is always seen grave, without a grain of humour in him. He cannot see things in broader perspective; his readiness to offer Subhadra to the rescuer is a vivid example. He thus humiliates himself. But the sincere love and sympathy of Krishna and Garga serve as a screen to protect him from being mocked or hated.

He is over-virtuous and may, therefore, be termed a noble villain.

Narada. We see very little of Narada; but he is one of the important Dramatis Personae for it is he who gives the drama its very existence by dissuading Arjuna from committing suicide, and persuading him to take the vow of Sanyasa. This vow ultimately puts the hero in a very compromising position. He creates the element of humour, and his is the first hit in it. He is intriguing by nature; he is very fond of creating complications, himself remaining unscathed. He has been sent by Krishna, and knows everything. But he is bold in making assertions against him only to illude Arjuna to disbelieve his bosom friend. This little act of Narada stands effective in a piece so full of sentiment.

Garga. His authority is striking. One can take him to be a real benefactor, from the countable words he speaks - appearing only once in the whole drama.

Clown. He is a but, on whom every one should exercise one's wits. He is a favourite friend of Krishna, and follows his lead. He is at the same time useful. He creates pity for himself when he accuses Garga, so nobly championed by Krishna. He has that proverbial eagerness for food and other creature comforts. He has a ready wit to answer Rukmini's charge for taking late bath. He talks in an amusing manner and never becomes contemptible.

The above discussion is with reference to the original. And now when the general estimate of the play is dealt with, the reference is exclusively to the same. The choice of the title 'Sangita Saubhadra' is the outcome of Kilroskar's genius. Saubhadra stands pre-eminent amongst its Marathi fellows by its variety, skill in delineation of characters, and humour. There is no sign of sophistication. Every part of the work is elevated. The descriptions of scenery and nature are always realistic, vivid and forcible; reflections lofty. The language has its own flavour. It is expressive whether in prose or poetry. The songs are characterized by the element of sound which is an echo to the sense. The action of Saubhadra progresses right up from the Prologue, and creates curiosity. It never allows to divert attention from the central theme.

The tendencies of the age in which this play was written were : the people were apt to provide attention to the secular side of life, and not only to the terse sacredness; they had just begun to express feelings and not merely beliefs; they were becoming assertive not pressed; the life that was so far limited to the religious thought and cosmogony was becoming personal. Dramas were, therefore, highly appreciated. It's no wonder, hence, that Saubhadra was hailed, with veneration, and held as the supreme creation of a master genius. The burden of this noble creation is the triumph of steadfast, unfaltering and undying love for which no sacrifice is too

great. Sangita Saubhadra is a masterpiece. There are no sudden surprises. The movements are smooth, the tone is classically dignified. The characters are all elevated and they balance each other; heighten themselves and deepen the plot. The whole design is simple, but very vigorous.

This is true of all works of Kirloskar. The first two dramas did not see much light in his life time, nor afterwards. His Sangita Shakuntala is a translation. Sangita Saubhadra and Rama-Rajya-Viyoga were his originals, the latter remaining unfinished. But every piece proves, that he was a talented dramatist. His striking characteristics are (i) simplicity of construction, naturalness in style, realism in descriptions, as well as dramatic qualities of vigour, life and actions, and sharpness of characterization; (ii) The plot of each drama is unfolded in few effective situations (Shankara-Digvijaya excepted), that follow each other in their natural sequence, bringing out the sentiment to have a good grip; (iii) the style is simple, clear and sweetly embellished with figures whenever necessary. He does not lack in imagination; it is grand, lofty and vivid. He shows eye for nature; his descriptions are graphic. Step by step Kirloskar was approaching classicism: the classical trend is manifest effectively in Rama-Rajya-Viyoga, Saubhadra, being a stepping stone.

Influences on Kirloskar

Whatever credit of originality or greatness is given to any person, there is always a counting factor, that he is the product of his age. One is inspired and influenced by the sublime tendencies of the age one lives in. Kirloskar cannot be an exception.

Nearly twenty years before his birth, studies in vernaculars were being promoted and encouraged by the 'Bombay Native Education Society.' Celebrated

authors like Godbole, Rajwade, Lele and others not only took full advantage of the Society, but even after its suspension continued the activity of their own accord, and on their own responsibility by maintaining periodicals and news - papers, and by writing books to give their Mother language her worthy status. Mr. Godbole found, that the Sanskrit classics were being translated in foreign languages but not in Marathi. He made up this deficiency by his translations of various Sanskrit dramas. Rajwade and Lele followed his suit. And there appeared a number of dramas some of which were performed on the stage. These people must have influenced Kirloskar. An inspiring ideal was kept before the people and Kirloskar being himself a genius availed of it. This was regarding the literary element in his works. Regarding the technical side and the aspect of entertainment, the motive-spring of his inspiration was 'The Bhagavata' and the 'Parsi' Theatrical Companies, whose performances he happened to see at Belgaum and at Poona. Mr. Bhave the pioneer professional to a great extent tried to make the business side successful. But he cannot be said to have reformed the drama or the stage as a matter of that. It was not so till 1877. But in the said year Sokar Bapooji Trilokekar, a merited dramatist of Bombay produced his Nala-Damayanti showing what a reformed drama is, what was the effective way of distributing musical songs to various characters. how scientifically they could be set. Kirloskar must have studied all these works carefully. But he advanced with such rapid and big strides, - began so magnificently, and maintained his standard so capably, that he made people forget his predecessors at the very first stroke. He at once proved, that he was an artist and an architect of the highest order, maddenning thousands of spectators. He showed an admirable knack of forming a group of educated people, and musical experts having sonorous voice, and

personality, that is required for the stage. Kirloskar and Drama became an equation in those days.

Kirloskar's Influences.

Kirloskar shone like a luminary, though his sands of life were measured very soon. But he succeeded in creating for himself and for the Marathi stage a unique position which has still been maintained. He left behind hundreds of followers.

The most illustrious amongst them was the Late Mr. Govind Ballal Deval, who respected Kirloskar as his Guru. He reformed the Marathi drama still further. His style is sweeter still and more appropriate. Another person who eminently followed his lead was Anna Martanda. At Belgaum Kirloskar instituted Bharata-Shastrottejaka Mandali. One of its movers was Anna Martand. But when he went to stay at Bombay for business, he started an independent theatrical concern viz. 'Arya-kalottejaka'. 'Bombay Royal Opera Company' was started by one Mr. Dongare on the style of Kirloskar. 'Svadesha Hitachintaka', 'Patankar' have followed his path. The tradition Mr. Kirloskar set up, of forming a team, discussing the plays with its members and in consultation with other learned people in order to give the plays and their presentation a finish was continued till the second decade of the Twentieth century. The detailed study of his influences on later dramatists cannot be encompassed in the short span of this work. But the tribute Mr. Deval paid to Kirloskar's memory is eloquent enough. Deval immortalizes him by saying 'The poet Balavanta was the very Sage Bharata, reborn to save the Histrionic Art uptilnow.' He is still held in the same esteem. The advocates of modernization of the dramatic technic say frankly even to-day, that the Maharashtra Stage will only thrive, if excellent dramas of the nature of Saubhadra and the like were to come forth.

Two outstanding memorials deserve mention in this connection (1) "Kirloskar Press" and (2) "Kirloskar Theatre." The press was set up in the year 1908, which printed a periodical "Rangabhumi" (Stage) for many years in Poona - which served as the main source of information for almost all books, written of late, on the history of the Maharashtra Stage. Kirloskar Theatre was built in 1909 to perpetuate his memory. The former one is now extinct. The latter exists, but is now unfortunately used for Cinema - not because it is unsuitable for dramatic performances, but because of the aptness of the progressive world to change attitudes, ideals and idols, also. Be it as it may, such materialistic tendencies cannot diminish the influence of Kirloskar. Admiration of his cultural works will remain ever green in our hearts. His plays will never be lost sight of as a mere passing phase, and Maharashtrians will love to enliven his endearing memory. His influence will ever remain powerful and sublime.

Kirloskar's Achievements.

That his plays are still held in high esteem after sixty years from their writing is not a small success. Kirloskar was confident of his success it seems. This gauging of the intrinsic value of his own works is expressed in his play Saubhadra (cf. p. 122 ll. 4-7; and also p. 4, ll. 13-22). If he has shown originality in discovering plots for his dramas, he has shown an inventive genius in their psychological and dramatic development. He shows consistent struggle - the principle that controls the spectators. He gradually develops the struggle together with the development of characters that participate in it. His dramas are decked with brilliant dialogues in lucid and homely style. Although he dealt with Mythological characters, he gave them a human touch, and unconsciously deified the humanity. There is apparent in his

plays that sublime fusion of the natural and the supernatural, which renders a high colour of romance to his works. None of his predecessors dreamt of these essentials. It is not a surprise, therefore, if people were enamoured of him to hold him as an epoch-maker. The charm that is the crown and glory of his dramas is Music. It is after a lapse of two centuries nearly, that the people were again made aware of the fact that scientific music can be successfully introduced in dramas. Two centuries back, Bhonsala Kings and their learned dependents of Tanjore freely used such songs in different Indian Ragas. Sufficient light has not yet been thrown on the method that was adopted by the Tanjore connoisseur. Songs were chiefly sung by the Sutradhara alone in Bhave's regime. Stray attempts were made by Trilokekar, (and previous to him by Messers Lale and Taluke in their plays 'Ravanavadhā' and 'Parthapratiṇa' respectively,) to distribute songs to respective players (cf. Dandekar, Marathi Natya-srishti, part I, Marathi Natake, pp. 128, 29). But none except Kirloskar achieved the full form of the Musical play.

He revolutionized the Marathi Stage, illumined it, enlightened the people and reformed their taste in the way of a real benefactor. He proved that the Stage can be an effective medium to educate the people. Kirloskar was a real poet according to Emerson's notion. He had a 'new thought', 'new experience to unfold'. All people became 'richer in his fortune. For the experience of each new age requires a new confession and the world seems always waiting for its poet.' It won't suffice to say that Kirloskar merely re-started and established the tradition of the musical plays in Marathi. His services to his countrymen were even of a nobler type. The western civilization was deeply influencing the political and social life of Maharashtra. Much less it failed to influence the Stage. Some

attempts were made by patriots and national minds to perform Sanskrit dramas in Colleges; but the general public had no access thereto. They remained ignorant of their sublime beauties. Kirloskar was the first to reveal them, in pure Marathi, to be enjoyed by the public at large, through his 'Sangita Shakuntala'. He made the style of those classics popular by his original attempts Sangita Saubhadra and Rama-Rajya-Viyoga. Kirloskar has, therefore, a share with other great minds in awakening the people of Maharashtra to realize the ennobling and chastening beauties of the great civilization of the Orient, and in disuading the people from taking to foreign mode of living and thought. His services, therefore, have a national aspect and with veneration one terms him a National Dramatist of Maharashtra !

From all statements and details, it will be found that Kirloskar has acquitted himself well as a dramatist. His plays "seem things rather than mere words on account of his intensity of thought and vigour of expression, which display humanity and experience he possessed. Maharashtrians have earned and are earing dramatic pleasure from them. The translation of Sangita Saubhadra, which follows, may convince the wider world that our appreciation is genuine and that it does not arise merely out of spirit and sentiment provincial or national.

Saubhadra is being submitted to the world at large - "a tribune free from all suspicion of national or provincial partiality, putting a stamp on the best things and recommending them for general honour and acceptance."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sutradhara,	Director.
Krishna,	King of Dwaraka.
Balarama,	Elder brother of Krishna.
Satyaki,	Commander-in-Chief of Yadava-army.
Garga,	Royal Preceptor.
Narada,	A Sage.
Vakratunda,	Clown, friend of Krishna.
Ghatotkacha,	Demon, nephew of Arjuna.
Arjuna,	Middle brother of Pandavas.
Subhadra,	Younger sister of Krishna and Balarama.
Kusumavati,	} Subhadra's maids.
Saranganayana,	
Rukmini,	Wife of Krishna.
Kokila,	Rukmini's maid.
Nati,	Wife of Sutradhara.

Attendants, Officers, Priests.
Female musicians, Etc. Etc..

Scene :

Dwaraka and the precincts of the Raivataka
mountain near it.

SAUBHADRA

ACT I.

Nandi (Chorus).

Sutradhara :

Obeisance mine be to Almighty's feet !
My humble homage to Ganesha's feet !
Great Lord Ganesha, whose lovely chest is dight
With poets great - a wreath of jewels bright,
Where Kalidasa, their King, in pendent gold,
Decks glory in rays lustrous and manifold !

Propitious be to you
The God of Gods,
Great Shiva of Kailasa,
All Vishvas' Lord,
Whom tempted
His penancing beloved -
Beautiful and gracious,
Of teeth like Kunda-buds, and of plenteous braid,
The pride and the glory
Of Himalaya snowy, -
And whom she won embracing forest dread,
His blessings on you !

His blessings on you -
Who filled with Joy,
Took her hand so coy,
When offered by
The Chieftain
Of the world's highest mountains,
For his daughter's resolve;
She, a faithful spouse, - for she discarded
The Enemy of Mura,
Indra and Chandra -
Followed Shiva, her choice all surpassing,
Propitious be to you !

Sutradhara : Brief is my panegyric ! But it is enough, as fully faithful to him. I should now go home to begin the performance of my beloved's choice.

(*Looks here and there*
'Tis strange ! How is it that my darling is not here ?
Where might she be, then ?

(*Looks again*
O, there she comes ; but minds not my presence.
The bee seems to be humming something in its own engrossment. Let me hear the strain.

Then enter Nati.

Nati : Uneasy lie the parents, that have a daughter eligible for marriage ! Her 'weal' is their anxious concern ; the 'nature' of her husband is the care, that almost wears out their hearts ; the sort of 'treatment' she will receive, from her relations-in-law, is their vexing thought. And even if they

celebrate her nuptials, in all good anticipations and under fulfilled conditions, their anxiety does not end withal - as if it will never - for another fear, then, lurks in their mind and vexes them a long way in their life, and that is, "How will she herself behave with them, afterall !

Sutradhara: (*Approaches her*) My dear me, why are you so anxious about our daughter's marriage ? Believe me, then. He creates, first of all, bride - groom for the bride; He is the Doer, and nothing takes place, in this universe, without His absolute will ! Wait and patiently see as to how He fulfills Himself.

Nati: Pshaw ! You are always philosophic thus and to no purpose in the world. The girl is fast growing. Will you not find a suitable match for her ?

Sutradhara: Oof ! Do you think me to be so disinterested in this matter ? Take it from me, that I have, already, settled her match, and have now come to meet you to relieve you of your burden. The groom, that I have chosen, is rich, virtuous, beautiful and of a noble birth. What Madana was to Rati, will he be to our daughter.

Nati: (*Embraces him*) So ! Then one thing more and one alone, I do long to know. My Lord; please, tell me his pedigree and place and parents and age, and dowry, you will endow him with, and -

Sutradhara: So this is your one question, Eh ? To be brief, My Darling, he is in your full know.

Nati: (*Delighted*) How ! Who's he ?

Sutradhara: None else than my own sister's son, residing in this very Dwaraka. Chandrakanta is the groom elect.

Nati: Adds it sugar to the 'sweetness of milk, isn't it ?

Sutradhara: Very ! But apart from that, My Love, is the gentle audience simply to remain contented with our buzzings over our daughter's marriage ? They have graced us for our performance and not for this, I believe.

Nati: O, forgive me, My Lord ! What play do you intend to stage for them ?

Sutradhara: Listen. As with the hackneyed dish, served over and over again, the art-lovers seemed all fed up with the rich and savoury treats of Kalidasa, the leading poet. Just to relieve them, a great poet Balavanta has invented pies by his immense genius and skill, and has given them good stomach. I, therefore, desire to produce one of his romantic plays, Sangita Saubhadra, which bears well on the above intent. Do thou, O Love, prepare for the same, please.

Nati: With pleasure, My Lord.

Sutradhara: How sweet of you, Dearest ! But before that, will you not sing a sweet tribute to this pleasant Spring ?

Nati: O Sure !

Pleasant is the tide of Spring !
Voluptuous cuckoos merry sing,
Fully drunk with mango - wine
And glory of the'r love divine.

Jasmine's bloom with flower smiles,
 The bee, in humming lost, beguiles;
 Breezes heavy with perfume
 Treat the tree's sprouting plume;

With their lords the damsels stroll,
 Letting Jasmine garlands roll
 On their faithful bosoms white,
 With fragrant, soothing sandal dight;
 The cheerful moon her rays doth fling:
 Bracing is the tide of Spring!

Hymeneal pandals stud the city;
 The sky echoes the pealing ditty;
 Thro' the coloured heaving street,
 For Dakshina, priests run in heat.
 The regal joy in fullest swing!
 Hail, Vaishakha, the tide of Spring!

Sutradhara: Pretty, very pretty! Just the description of our metropolis! More fitting to the Royal Palace, where they are very busy manoeuvring for a very big ceremony. The King has decided to offer his sister, Subhadra, to King Duryodhana.

Behind the curtain

"Fie, fie on you, you wretched descendent of Bharata! How dare you name that blind man's son, instead of this mighty Dhananjaya!"

Sutradhara: Methinks, Dear, my words seem to have enraged Dhananjaya, who faring in his

pilgrimage must have reached Dwaraka. Let us clear away from here, hence.

Exit both.

End of the Prologue.

Then enter Arjuna in a pilgrim's dress.

Arjuna: (*Repeats, " Fie, fie on you, etc." as before*) Is it even six months, that I am out ? I wonder how such a scandal should be afloat in so short a time ! How possibly can that bastard son of the blind dare snatch away my share ? How can Lord Krishna break his promise ? How Haladhara deigns to make a fool of himself, and present so beautiful a gem to that libertine ape ? 'Tis surprising ! And alas ! O Subhadra, have you also faithlessly followed their suit ? Never, never will the holy Ganges run to meet a dirty pool, of her own accord; never will the crescent Moon willingly jump into the mouth of demon Rahu. If ever the Vedic Lore has become survile to an outcast, or if at all a delicate doe has knowingly taken resort to a hyena-den, or if ever since the beginning of the world a cow has delightfully delivered herself to a butcher, then and then alone will you probably reject me to choose Duryodhana. Ah me ! why cruelly accuse that poor soul for nothing. She is but a dependent, and must perforce have fashioned herself thus. When I was last in Dwaraka, I saw my Love, and I am certain. she was completely faithful to me in her love. Like a lotus delighted at the advent

of the Moon, she, having the majestic gait of an elephant, smiled at me to respond my Love. How then possibly can that scoundrel woo my beloved ? This is improbable. Does Krishna, then, insist upon that lovely lady to woo that son of Dhritarashtra ?

(Reflects

This too is equally improbable. He will never be unfavourable to his devotees, whom he loves dearer than his own soul. He delights in their peace and prosperity; grieves at their miseries. When by nature he becomes restless on account of our difficulties and runs to our rescue, will he ever vary with us unwarranted ? His was an uncommon love towards us, we Pandavas, and especially towards me, as if we both were one and the same. He, at times, was fain to belittle himself, and has, actually coaxed and cajoled my horses, driven my chariot, and has enhanced the strength of my arms a hundredfold to put Gods to shame. He has, thus brought me victorious against them. Why then, O Fate, thou shouldst take a serpentine turn like this ? My fault ! It must not be Krishna. That Lord of Revati must have mongered all this confusion, sure. And to what end should you be so hard on me, Balarama ? What way have I offended you, that you should forget our kinship, trample on your brother's wish, crush your sister's heart, and pass on me so serious a sentence ? God forgive ! Am I not foolishly guessing on hearing the delusive words of that son of Bharata ? Ought may happen ! Never will they unite Subhadra with Duryodhana, in preference to me. The rogue must have simply incensed me to amuse himself.

Wherefore, then, the pros and cons? I should better spend whatever few days that are remaining in seeing the holy places, that I have not yet visited, and see Dharma, as early as possible.

(Moves, hears as if some tune of the Vina, & stops

O. Joy! Here these sweet notes of the Vina greet my ear. O, how peculiarly pregnant are they with the eternal devotion to Hari! Sure, they herald the advent of Sage Narada. 'Tis a boon, in disguise, that foretells fulfilment of my heart's desire, if I were to see, presently, so great a saint!

(Waits.

Then enter Narada singing and dancing.

Narada:

Jaya! Radhadhara-madhu-milinda!

Jaya! Hari, Govind!

O, Rama's Husband!

O, whose lotus-feet, that bear

Benign sandy marks,

From the Jamuna's banks,

What Gods even love to adore!

Jaya! Radhadhara-madhu-milinda!

O, Lifter of the Mount,

O, Saviour devout,

O, whose sport in the Milkman's hut,

As killing the Giant,

Expelling the Serpent,

Are the world's talk and trust!

Jāya ! Radhadhara-madhu-milinda !

Mind's Elixir !

O, Deliverer !

Do not slight my mighty :praise;

Jaya, Govinda !

Hari, Govinda !

Thy hand in benediction raise !

Ah ! Nowhere and nothing but the manifestation of Satchidananda Parameshvara Himself ever greets our eye; nothing but His chaste and chastening Divine Power haunts our mind. But in spite of this fact, the bewildering humanity is grovelling, in vain, to seek Him fixed at a particular place - Him, the All-pervading One. Look : Still, in His innate state, He indulges in wanton sports causing semblances of various sorts in diversely changing movable forms - like the Sun, who is the cause of (showing) both the object and its shade, which it obtains by his rays; - like Gold, the quality of which is the same throughout the rim of a kundala decked with diverse patterns. Thus the ever Entire, Pure, and Uncomparable Almighty is both the Pervader and the Pervaded.

(Comes forward.

Arjuna: A bow to the sage of stupendous achievements - a bow of the Middle Pandava !

Narada: May your desires be fulfilled, Child !
Whither bound alone ?

Arjuna: On a pilgrimage for a year, Sire, in full compliance with Your Holiness' dictates. Visiting

thus the sanctuaries of all quarters, except the West, I have now reached this place.

Narada: My dictates you mean ? (*Reflects*) Ah, now I remember it. May be ! But how does this chastisement come to fare with thee ?

Arjuna: I crave the pleasure of Your Holiness to hear me. It so happened once, in Indraprastha, that I was retiring to my apartments late about midnight, after finishing up my duties, when I saw a mass of excited Brahmanas, rushing through the portals of my Palace, crying aloud, " Help, Help ! Thieves are taking away our cows ! " I, immediately assured them to restore their cows, and —

Narada: And what next ?

Arjuna: Next I made straight for the armoury to equip myself with missiles when, as ill luck would have it, I saw there Queen Draupadi in dalliance with King Dharma; but heedlessly I went in, armed myself, came out, fought with the thieves, rescued the cows, and restored them to their respective owners. And then to expiate the sin of seeing the Queen in that state, I had to take recourse to that sacred command of Your Holiness.

Narada: I am so happy to find you all brothers thus strictly abiding by my orders,

Arjuna: So am I at Your Holiness' pleasure ! With pardon, may I know Your Holiness' destination ?

Narada: Lo ! Methinks, you are in the absolute dark because of your tour ! Don't you know, that they are all agog at your maternal uncle's ?

Really ? Lend me your ear then. I am to attend the marriage ceremony in Dwaraka, you see ! King Balaram is giving his sister in marriage to King Duryodhana. Just imagine its grandeur. A huge gathering of gods, sages, kings, actors and dancers all gala fun and festival ! Splendid ! Cut and come again will be the order of those celebrations. A rare chance for a human being ! Don't you think so ?

Arjuna: (*With a sigh of grief*) Alas ! Sad news will never prove to be untrue ! And with such recurring experience, humanity still invariably falls a prey to deluding hope !

Narada: Hey ! Joy was never so sad ! You ought to have rejoiced at such tidings from Dwaraka. Why are you so sad instead ?

Arjuna: Mercy me, Holiness ! How shall I express, that while yet in teens, myself and Subhadra both lived together and loved ; and the people were led to think of her marriage with me as a certainty. Balarama himself, consulting the elders and Krishna, regarded our love with a solemn declaration of her betrothal to me. But perverted as they are now, they are severing me from my Love so rudely. They are, I should say, lopping off the very plant, they themselves fostered to grow so beautifully, by now !

Narada: You don't say so ! Have they, in the first place, encouraged and promised you, and are they, now, determined to break their own promise ? That Krishna, then wrongs you unbecomingly !

Arjuna: Did Your Holiness charge Krishna ?

Speak, pray O Most Excellent Sage, speak. Does he really approve of her match with Duryodhana ?

Narada: Thou art too credulous to see through his cunning ! He has actually deceived you. It is the imperial wealth of Duryodhana, that he weighs to give you up. A sheer insult to you ! Don't you think so ?

Arjuna: Ah ! I see through it, now as you say. There is no doubt, that he wants me to fall out of humanity and hide my face from the world.

Narada: Ahem, Ahem ! You simply astonish me ! Why should you mourn, O Valiant, as if heavens are empty for you ? You are the first and foremost of the archers ! Wherefore should you abuse your status ? The wind may be furious, howsoever, the mountain never moves a bit at it ; Shiva remains unaffected by the sight of the deadly venom. You are great, and you will win, if you mean, divine damsels that will make her, nay even Indira and Rati, sing small with one look and will make you forget Subhadra as a trifle.

Arjuna: A Trifle ! may Your Holiness say so. But I am twice sad : first, as the whole world knows it, we loved each other sincerely and brought up our feeling till now, only to see it frustrated just at the time of its fruition ; and next, all shame and darkness for me, my patrons are bestowing the share - the prize that was mine - on him, my foe in blood and deed.

Narada: Oh ! This did not strike me at all ; but looking from your point of view, I now feel that your plight is highly deplorable.

Arjuna: Beyond words, if I may say so. He, in whom I believed that he considered me as a bosom friend, - he whom I adored like a God, he now chooses to betray me thus. He could have chosen for her any king other than my foeman-Duryodhana, if he thought me to be unworthy of his sister's hand. But he is definitely bent upon honouring my deadly enemy! That's the sorrowful dart, that rends my heart in twain.

Narada: Don't allow your heart now to be a nest for sorrow to brood; As you know, grinding shows the charcoal blacker! Now better finish up your pilgrimage and present yourself, ere long, before your honourable brother, Lord Dharma. Forget and leave your sorrow's severity to Time, that is the best healer.

Arjuna: Tut; what the holy ramblings or the holier sight of Dharma concern me now! The end of my own life's journey is before me; and that I am soon to cover. Please, therefore, O Kind Sage, do me a favour.

Narada: Sure! I shall do my mite;

Arjuna: So kind of you, O Sage! Tell them their Lordships, my brothers, this woeful tale with my last message, that he, to whom they had appointed to conquer the enemies, having lost his coveted prize and having become an easy prey to the world's censure - Death, is lost to them. Let Lord Bhima, the mightiest of the mighty, succeed him.

Narada: Hey! You are winding up matters so abruptly - what is the big idea?

Arjuna: Very plain, very simple! I cannot show my brazen face to the wicked world, - not for a moment. Suicide - !

Narada: Suicide? And designed by a peerless warrior like yourself? A sin, a great sin indeed!

Arjuna: On what compulsion must I fear such indictments now?

Narada: That's not it. Always behave so as to attain weal in this and the next world.

Arjuna: I shall then become an ascetic and pass my life on bulbs and roots in some far off jungle; but sever I must, my connections with such wicked people, once for all.

Narada: All there! And how pleasant will it be, if you keep a loophole even in the course of such severity, as you are now going to vow and adopt? Of course, I cannot disclose it unless you vouchsafe perfect confidence in me.

Arjuna: What infidel lives under the sun and believes not the words of Your Holiness? I beseech, therefore, Your Holiness to instruct me - a receptacle worth your commandments.

Narada: Look here then. A mendicant you mean to be, Ay? Be then a Tridandin, leaving a sufficient scope for yourself, if by fate or fortune, you get a chance to quench the dormant fire of your heart and lead the marital life again.

Noise behind the curtain

"Order, Ye Soldiers; Lord Satyaki, the Commander-in-Chief, commands you to keep a diligent watch over the Raivataka forest, since Her

Royal Highness the Princess, Subhadra, is mysteriously missing from her boudoir just at the nick of time of her own marriage. Several contingents have been dispatched in diverse directions in her search, while this particular area has been entrusted to your watchful guard."

Arjuna: (*Aside with delight*) Marry ! Subhadra is missing from her boudoir today - the very day of her nuptials, and that she is being searched in this very forest, My Joy ! (*Aloud*) Then, Holiness ! my shattered hope, even like a sapless tree, will sprout into life again under the shower of such news. I will, therefore, search for the apple of my eye in these rudy pastures. My eye may, luckily, profit by her sight.

Narada: Ad libitum ! But don't forget my advice, if needed.

Arjuna: How shall I forget that wisdom ?

Narada: Very well, I will go now to acquaint myself with this catastrophe, that befalls them in Dwaraka.

Arjuna: My bow to Your Holiness !

Narada: Victory be with you !

(*Prays God*)

O Sanctifying Vamana, Thou who art Vishnu Himself - the possessor of the Kaustubha gem - the gratifier of the hearts of the yogis ; Thou that art Hari Himself, devoted to Pralhada, and the killer of the furious Demon ; Thou, the Destroyer of the dangers of the worldly life of Balavanta ; O One, decked with the garland of the fresh Tulsi - leaves,

○ Vaman! bestow on me the perpetual craving
for Your constant adoration !

Exit Narada.

Arjuna: (*Moves about; looks inside*) How's this ?
Goodness! a demon comes this way like a huge
cloud, descending on earth below with lightning !
No, not lightning but a woman, he seems to carry
on his shoulders; and her limbs not the
lightning are flashing. Its a happy coincidence,
that the news of Subhadra's disappearance and
the advent of this demon with a lovely lady are
simultaneous ! Oh ! if these facts were
reciprocal ! Whatever it is, I should not leave
this place, until I know the truth of it.

(*Stands looking in the same direction.*

Then enter the Demon as described.

Demon: (*With a loud roar and laughter*) O Ho !
I have had her at last, in spite of tremendous
obstructions, that , so far, had foiled my intense
desire to secure her for myself. Blessed am I, now
that I possess her.

(*Looks up at Subhadra*

Lo ! She's yet in a trance. Let me put her on
this heap of twigs, and withdraw my spell, so that
she will become conscious.

(*Places her down*

Who dares now liberate her from me ! I am the
sole idol, blessed to enjoy this pleasure at my will !

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Sure, this rascal must have

kidnapped that woman. But then who might she be? - My Beloved?

(Looks closely

No doubt, it is she. I say even without seeing her face :

O None else hath the hue
Of golden Ketaki;
So slim and soft, 'tis hers
The form and majesty;
Soles of her tender feet
With twilight colour gleam;
Creating whom, Creator
Achieved his fondest dream.
No shred of doubt, 'tis she -
Gem of my heart's desire;
In gazing on her charm,
Mine eyes shall never tire !

But will it prove an illusion ? Just as timidity conceives a ghost and is frightened by its shadows even in the dark, so may my mind, seized by her thought, timidly fashion any womanish form to be my beloved's, and may get excited. Oh, she is recovering, and I need not be perplexed, as the truth will be evident in a moment !

Demon: O Lo ! Here she begins to open her long dark eyes, like the drunken consciousness, liberated from the spirit. Let her completely recover, and I shall embrace her even before she winks.

Subhadra recovers. The Demon makes for her. Arjuna intervenes and pushes him aside. Scuffling both exit.

Subhadra: (Sits up) O Heavens ! All my maids have taken advantage of my momentary lull, and have gone away leaving me alone ! How —

(Looks about

And what's this ?

(Startles up

I was in my bed, and not on such leafy twigs.

(Recollects

O yes ! I remember now. I myself did ask them to put me on some cool bed of leaves, just to spare me from the scorching fumes of the fire of separation when they were surging high. Obeying they must have removed me to this garden. O this coolness ! This at last did lull me to a fine sleep, though for a short while. Still 'tis not an excuse enough for them to clear away ; one of the wenches ought to have been at the call.

Behind the curtain

Arjuna: You wicked, you cause of cruelty to chaste women ! Let go tumbling down this precipice, as I throw off this bundle of your hands, that touched the beautiful, and your filthy chanting mouth, that entranced her, and the clump of your trunk, that bore her hither ; and let the beasts feast on them to their heart's content.

Subhadra: (*Listens*) Even a distant voice makes me think, that some one is coming to drag me to the hymeneal hall. Mercy me, God! I am at a loss to know, how will I ever get rid of this danger.

Then enter Arjuna besmeared with blood.

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Wonder! The conjurer suddenly disappeared, when I was about to lop off his head. It is rather sad! But I must let him go scot-free, lest another mishap befalls this lonely beauty, left in this dreary forest.

(*Looks at her*

Ah! here is the fulfilment of mine eye. Definitely she is my beloved Subhadra, the Queen of my heart, and the Majesty of my eye! The Demon then I should think, is my veritable friend, as he has done me a beneficial turn. Whether or not to give her my cognition is a question! She, by troth, cannot recognize me, while I am in such bloody clothes as these. Well, then, let me first overhear her, so that it will be an easy chance for me, to act up to my pretensions.

(*Stands off listening.*

Subhadra: I must thank my maids to have left me to myself and to a quiet chance to open my heart. Oh, the solitude! Ever since the settlement of this wretched marriage, some hateful association or the other pursued me like a ghost, and denied me isolation even.

Arjuna: (*Aside*) My God ! She supposes still to be in her own garden ; she seems to be unaware of this monstrous episode too. I shall not spoil her bliss of ignorance, nor harm her sentiment to an undesirable end.

Subhadra: (*Sits down*) O Divinities ! What havoc are you raging with me ? You have taken away the very tenderness from my brother's love and have replaced their affection by animosity. I hoped and hoped for the sympathy of Krishna, but in vain. My eldest brother sets at naught my parents, in his unquestioned and imperious authority. But I defy you, O Divinities ! I shall prefer death to the marriage with that son of the blind.

(*Heaves a sigh of grief.*

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Brava, My Love, brava ! You appear lovelier than ever to me, by your eloquent hatred towards wooing Duryodhana ; but name him, O Dear, the blessed one that has proved worthy of you. I shall consider him happier than the happiest in the world. Your brothers ! I know what has turned them to like that blind man's son ; I know what vitiates them to bear me hard, and forget the well connected friendship. Its the luring lure of wealth ! But you, indeed, have achieved real merit in sticking fast to the ethereal loveliness and glory of Truth, though the world may take you to be but a frail woman !

Subhadra: Its a pity, that there should be none to sympathise with me, in my distress ! Or how can

there be any? Alas! To whom shall the subjects that are being looted by their own king, the child beaten by its own mother, and the sister in the hands of her own mercenary brother, - to whom shall these surrender for solace?

Arjuna: (Aside vehemently) Right! Absolutely right you are! Such are your brothers, bent upon bartering you.

(Gnashes his teeth)

And fie upon my independence, that prevents me from wreaking vengeance on them for all their misdeeds done to you, without orders from Dharma-raja! I would I were a freeman to contract enmity with that wretched clan of the Yadavas!

Subhadra: (With tears) O accursed fate! Like a cruel spider thou hast completely caught me in thy web; and left me no chance of emancipation, that I might hope and live. What hast thou done to him - my lover, on whose strength I have defied, till now, my relations, friends and brothers themselves? Where are you, O Ocean of strength, O Foremost of the warriors, where are you wandering forgetful of your pledge? The seed of love, that thou hadst sown in my heart, has sprouted and has budded into a powerful tree, under whose shade thou art sitting like a beautiful idol. But none has depth to see such a magnificent picture, studded in my heart.

Arjuna: (Aside) But to whom are you addressing all this, O Sweet One?

Subhadra: Be kind, and true to your promise

O Son of Pandu ! I beseech you. I shall not swerve a bit from my resolve, an my throat were cut actually.

Arjuna: Ah ! My doubts are cleared now. It takes me somewhere high in the regions of utmost joy; but the same, now, reveals my helplessness in her horrible plight, and I feel as if I am falling headlong down into the fathomless deep of miseries.

Subhadra: (*Looks up*) Goodness ! The Sun has set. The dark is creeping over the dusk. What do my maids mean ? Why none of them peeps in here ? Oh God, is this not my doomsday ? How's then the bustling drum of my doom so strangely still ?

Arjuna: (*Aside*) O, suspense is worst for her. I shall, hence, reveal to her everything, except the tale of myself and of the Demon.

Subhadra: (*Excited*) Oh, these officious jades ! None to my call, Eh ? Aye, Saranganayana, I say Kusumavati !

Arjuna: (*Comes forward*) Whom are you calling, O Beautiful ? Not to rude Nature, I suppose !

Subhadra: (*Stands up startled*) Rude Nature ! What do you mean ? And who are you to venture your dreadful intrusion in my budoir

Arjuna: Pardon ! A wayfarer, Lovely Lady. I have lost my track, and am led to the heart of this dreadful forest. Here I had to encounter a furious beast of prey, to appear so hideous in your eyes. My garments are stained with his blood, ahunting him.

Subhadra: (*Frightened*) Am I really in a dreadful forest ? Who brought me here ?

Arjuna: Well, I cannot exactly say as to how you have come to such a pass.

Subhadra: (*With tears*) Alas, curse be unto me ! Now my brothers and sisters and all will charge me, ever more cruelly, with a purposive venture to avoid my own marriage ; O God, Thou hast at last cast a slur on my honour, by such a mean contrivance and hast ruined me ! 'Tis too much ; I cannot bear it any more. Oh, I die, I die !

(*Faints.*)

Arjuna: O Subhadra, my beloved Subhadra !

(*Finds her speechless*)

Woe be unto me - a wicked, a killer of a woman ! What have I done ? I ought to have revealed myself to my pledging love, and borne her away, by this time. Fie, fie on me - a blockhead ! I have lost my prize, foolishly doting on whether or not Dharma would blame me. But surely, I haven't left her to herself for fear of the Yadavas, no, not a whit. What worth are they to me, while I am armed with this celebrated Gandiva ! and what worth are these vaunts, too ? Or why, I have lost nothing yet ; she has but fainted slightly ; let her recover to find herself in the arms of the truth ; and I shall then see the mettle of those Yadavas !

(*Bends his face to her's*)

Come, wake, beloved, wake up O Subhadra,

and look up to the bosom of Love that presseth you; it is your Partha and none else.

(Finds her still speechless

Oh, have I grieved you so much as not to have your response? My dear me, be kind to give me your forgiving look; I am miserable without you. I have come to your feet, - a devotee, O, for your welcome smile. O, give up your tacit ire, and speak. - Lo! she does not come to her senses still; the swoon is too powerful for her. I wish I had a little water at hand to treat her with. I must find it.

(Rises up

To leave her alone is also a risk! And what, if I take it? A moment won't create a monster again to bear her away. I shall cover her with this shawl - her own sweet present with my brodered name on it which she herself wrought.

(Covers her with the shawl

O, Lord of the Universe! O, Narayana! Here I deliver her unto your divine protection. Be pleased to save her, until I fetch some water.

Exit Arjuna.

Then enter again the same Demon.

Demon: Who, on earth, will know the powers of Krishna, the Lord of Dwaraka.

Even I am doing his will, that I brought Subhadra-devi here, and that I pretended as he desired. Everything is fashioning itself upto his designed expectations. Only a finishing touch of his trickery, now, and my task is done. I am to leave this message, written by himself, together with her necklace, in this purse; and restore her to her dormitory. Let me, therefore, hurry up my business.

(Removes the necklace from her neck; puts it in the purse together with the letter; enchants her, lifts her up and moves here and there.

Oh, the light burden ! Just a Jasmine flower, I have lifted to my shoulder ! But Lo, I should better run this - the other way.

Exit Demon with Subhadra in opposite direction.

Then enter Arjuna with water in his hand.

Arjuna: In a moment now -

(Does not find her

My God ! Where's she ? Have I missed the place ? Not at all. The spot's the same - this very heap of twigs, this very couple of trees - they are quite the same; where's she then ?

(With tears

Is it that any devouring beast - or that wretch of a Demon again - ? Help, help O Heavens, I am undone ! My Love, now, indeed are you lost to me ! In vain have you deluded and have mortified yourself for me. To no purpose did you fix your mind on this unworthy

wretch, which you better had diverted to woo that Duryodhana, and saved your life, that I may have consoled myself with your sight, at least! But where shall I find you now? Ah, I am undone, utterly undone! What use is my barren cry? Reconcile, my soul, to your lot, and fix yourself up.

(Moves about

Lo, what is lying here? A purse! Her possession perhaps! It must have slipped down as she moved about. What matter, if I open and see its contents?

Opens the purse; takes out of it the necklace and the letter

Goodness! I know this necklace!

(Stares at it

Very! My own affectionate return of her courtesies! And how reads this letter?

(Opens it

Written by herself, I believe, and to me addressed too. There is no risk, hence.

(Reads

“ At the lotus-like feet of His Royal Highness Prince Partha, the Noble Lord of my Soul, may my humble request beg compliance - ”

(Remarks

O Dear! A wretch as I am, I don't deserve such noble attributes from a nobler soul like you! Very well, what's next?

"O Ornament of the Lunar Race, O Kind Lord of my Soul, O Vijaya, how cruelly have you abandoned your love, knowing well that I was yours, body and soul? How long are you going to wait, when regardless of my desire my brothers are bent upon disposing me off to Duryodhana. But I warrant, I shall not budge an inch from ending my life, if you still neglect to run down to my rescue. This necklace betokens my true love to you -

Sure, she must have planned to send this message and this love's token somehow, and would have carried it out but for this mischief-mongering savage. Let go. What's her essay in these last lines?

"Will it not behove you better to be a Sanyasin and make me a serving Nun by your side, than be a disgraceful pilgrim, and passively see with the naked eye, your own enemy taking away your pledged wife - myself, for his use?"

(Struck with grief

How cruel, O love! You have, alas, hurled a deadliest dart, in the form of this scripture, at last and, oh, shattered my heart completely! But why blame you, My Love? If ever fury was modest, it was less than yours!

(Thinks awhile

Well, here by your suggestion, I swear to be a mendicant, counting beads of this rosary in your name and citing and reciting this epistle

in the spirit of a holy scripture ; but just to defer the august advice of that sanguine Sage, I will be a Tridandin, that's all.

(Rises up

But am I sure to have really seen her, as contrived by the Demon, or was it all a dream ? Be it as it may. Let me follow my religious determination.

Exit Arjuna.

End of Act 1.

ACT II.

Then enter Krishna seated.

Krishna: (Looks to the curtain) Hey, who's there ?

Enter Warder.

Warder: Your obedient, My Lord.

Krishna: Where is His Majesty, our elder brother ? Do you Know ?

Warder: His Majesty is on a visit to His Holiness Shri Garga, My Lord.

Krishna: (Aside) That's good; The preceptor, as our partisan, is sure to speak in tune to the situation and turn our brother to favour us. (Aloud) Well, go to announce to us the royal return, no sooner you know it, Chakradanda,

Warder: Your pleasure, My Lord.

Exit Warder with a bow.

Krishna: My peerless brother - a matchless nobility under the sun ! Its a crime to use our

cunning against him, sure. Can't help! It is necessitated by his own obstinacy, that insists to offer Subhadra to Duryodhana, even against her own will, and nothing short of it, an she were doomed to suicide, in the contingency of her marriage with anybody else than Arjuna. The situation is quite grave and compromising for us. But our Preceptor of preceptors comes like a godsend to relieve me by his encouragement. I am sorry to plan against my own brother. Well, the end alone justifies the means! Right up from the theft of cows and the sudden revelation of Queen Draupadi in dalliance with King Dharma, to the subjection of Arjuna to the punishment, laid down by Sage Narada, I had to scheme. Then I had to send the latter to inform Arjuna of the facts from here while he is a pilgrim. And all this sheer to avoid a rash outbreak of war, which was inevitable and decisive, had he been, at this juncture, in his capital; Pandavas would never have spared us then. This stratagem, thus, is quite justifiable. But to achieve this, I had to manage so many plans: first I was required to win over Shri Garga to fix up only the last date for marriage and postpone it till the end of the Chaturmasya, for want of any immediate propitious day for such a celebration. Nothing succeeds like success. The Demon also became very handy in time, and he, as a trusted member of our family, has performed his part well in removing Subhadra from her palace, at the nick of time, and bringing her to the notice of Arjuna, and, with equal

skill, also in shifting her away from the forest, in his briefest absence, to dishearten him completely. Who would expect, otherwise, a gallant to take a vow of Sanyasa - a perfect humiliation to his profession? My letter, moreover, couched in my sister's style, did but rivet his mind on that vow and inspired mere intention to solemn action on his part. As for the marriage-party of Duryodhana, they have already made their way to Hastinapura, delighted at the mysterious restoration of Subhadra, and have, in good faith, solemnly consented to celebrate the nuptials after the lapse of the Chaturmasya. The project undertaken is almost successful so far. Let me now further it. Arjuna, supposing his beloved as lost for good, is now a perfect mendicant - asceticism incarnate, averse to the pleasures of life, in a cave of the Raivataka. He shows a Yogin; but dovetails to the regal figure of Subhadra, that he has enthroned in his bosom. It is wonderful, that he conceals well his intent by a characteristic inward gaze. He is sure to catch my brother's fancy who would be advocating him in no time. My brother should only see him once. But this is not enough. I would he were a popular by-word in every house-hold, here. Why worry ! I have picked up the very best agent for this purpose. Oh, here comes he - my trusted Brahmana friend Vakratunda.

(Looks to the curtain

Here comes that celebrity ! Oh, the wonderful gait and gesture, that perfectly harmonise his name !

Enter Clown with a hissing sigh.

Clown: Not even the utmost stretch of gentility should ever stand to befriend this Krishna ! As a mere joke he made me flounder in the forest of the Raivataka, the sun yet asleep. What is that penancing fool to him, even if he were hanged ! Oof ! - Ah ! These my tiring legs and these pricks of those mischievous thorns ! Rascals broke their necks, but did at last pierce thro' and thro' the shoe and have pricked and jaded me. Hem ! This is the only gain of the discounted friendship, that did not direct the exact spot even ! Mischievous tyrant ! He wants fun, and he wanted me to explore that miserable Yati in some remote cavern, after treading lots of stony paths - paths, bristling with thickets through out that rugged forest. No go ! I had to do it, and now have to release the news from there to this mischief-monger. Oh Devil's Luck, that he is so easily found here ! Let me report, not to avoid him, and go home straight, lest he involves me in some other intricacy.

(Approaches Krishna

Hail, all hail, my friend ! Nicely have you reduced me to such a plight !

Krishna: Hail, dear friend; have a seat here. Say you of your plight ? What's wrong with you ?

Clown: Oof! What's wrong? Look at the sieve of my foot. What do you suffer to be a chattering idler?

Krishna: Myself a chattering idler! Don't be snappish, friend! I admit your heroism. To sedate pains of your exhaustion, I shall order you a soothing massage. Will it do? Now do but tell me first of your mission.

Clown: Don't you worry about it, sweet wag. Imagine, that I appeared there only to be crushed down in the crowding arrays of the mob, an exhibition of a big roaring tumult—a confusion ever worst confounded—some praying before His Holiness for progeny, and others for wealth and for health, and for this and for that, and for what not,—all a ravishing confusion of salutes and salutary presents. Just think, that where there was not a foot-track to the cavern, this treading mob has beaten a wide wide way of twelve arms length.

Krishna: (*Aside*) Oh the smooth carriage of my scheme! Now the ascetic, as a famous by-word, will soon reach the ear of our brother. And what more fun do I expect? (*Aloud*) I wonder, my friend, at his tremendously quick reputation.

Clown: You wonder, don't you? But you shouldn't unless you find any difference between the sheep and people. A falling sheep gets the following of a leaping fraternity. It is just the same. Hear me. Only yesterday, some local Brahmanas had gathered, at the Sage Garga's,

and the latter was discussing a topic with them, understand ! And all of a sudden, that hirling of a priest, as if possessed by some ghost, got up and began to bawl out, " A rare chance, a rare chance ! " And unmindful of his environments, began marching quick, listlessly, and other thoughtless blocks, like fools, followed him there and then.

Krishna: (*Impatiently*). This is not a yarn, is it ?

Clown: A yarn ! Do you think I would invent such a thing ? With that shocking pack of fools behind, our Holy Preceptor made for the cave of that ascetic, found him there, fell prostrate at his feet and stood before him in the mood of supplication. And when this news of so grand a condescension reached the city, My God ! multitudes after multitudes poured down at the cave like swarms of locusts.

Krishna: (*Shows gratitude*) O my Holy Preceptor ! What a great risk thou hast run to save thy disciple from calumny. The scriptures have, in altruism, pronounced the Spiritual Preceptor as the only Deity for the worshipping world and thou hast instanced it well.

What so staunch and kind
An advocate we find,
A forceful mind behind
Like Preceptor,

To bear himself, whate'er,
To credit us, repair,
Our happiness prepare
Like Preceptor ?

'Trio' in Thee doth shine :
In that spirit divine
Thou rul'st the world benign,
Holy Preceptor !

Aloof from illusion,
Thou remainest anon,
What gods do fail to shun,
Holy Preceptor !

Untainted Teacher blest !
Bring'st up disciples best.
Truth's great treasures invest
On them, Preceptor !

All credit to the earnest zeal and zest of my
Preceptor ! (*Aloud*) Well, friend, apart from
that, have you preserved any remnant of the
gratuitous offerings, entrusted to you to be made
to His Holiness ? You must have left something
for me, that I may defer it !

Clown: (*Aside*) Ahem, ahem ! I thought
this rogue would forget it; but then he hasn't !
(*Aloud*) Look here, comrade dear, it so
happened, that while like a waylaid animal I was

tumbling and fumbling over the mountain, the sun struck me so hard - so hard, that I almost had lost hopes to survive it; I was sure to succumb any moment to that fatal stroke. But as luck should have it, quite then stole a wierd vision of a spring into my staggering sight, and I was tempted to sustain myself a little. Somehow I made for it and sat beneath the cool shade of some tree on the bank of that spring, offered those eatables mentally to the divinity and gulped them up wholesale, with the draught of water, but for which, good friend, insufficient though it was under such a calamity, (*with tears*) good friend, this poor fool of yours would actually have been a huddled heap amongst many others.

(Wipes off tears.

Krishna: Marry! I have caught your idea. I know it well, that sweets don't remain long without your stomach. Say, if you have preserved any bit of your pious dedications thereof!

Clown: Here you are, here you are! How will I forget to do so? If nothing more, I have gallantly reserved for you this much. Here you are -

(Shows him the bundle of wrappings.

Krishna: (Unwrapping the bundle) Wrappings, Eh!

(Clown laughs.

Krishna: All right! You will surely get a due return of your gallantry some day, mind!

Clown: Don't be serious, sweet wag! But then why are you making much ado about this ascetic as your own concern and harp upon the same chord as your sole business?

Krishna: (Ridicules) What a fool you are! That he is a divine manifestation, i'faith, is a sufficient reason for my concern. I wish him to be in Dwaraka, so that we shall all reap the benefit of seeing His Holiness, the moment we wish; that's all.

Clown: But how came you to know him to be such a great saint? Have you ever seen him?

Krishna: Where is the necessity of seeing him; is not Shri Garga a sufficient authority for that?

Clown: Ah, I see! The cat's out of the bag now. He is mongering all this mischief, Eh? Himself is an author of such wild hypocrisy! Hem, I warrant to lodge my complaint against him before His Majesty's court.

Krishna: Hush, hush you fool! What makes you swear at him?

Clown: (Brightened) So! I am a fool, Eh? Well, hear me, sweet wag; just as he is the author of hypocrisy, so is he an abettor, that induces my wife to commit a crime. I am disgusted to have seen her a fanatic amongst others at his instance. Before my open eye, the shrew did pour at that mendicant's feet baskets and baskets of oranges; and if only I had my way, my wrathful staff would have meted out

a bloody crown to that divinity, by my ear.
Sycophants!

Krishna: (*Ridicules*) Forget it, Fool. But tell me first, as to what boon did she expect to shower on her in return?

Clown: Oh! What else than that she should, verily; get a handsome partner like my own graceful self, in every one of her future births; that's it; be sure.

Krishna: A fool naturally takes the world as foolish! Remember, hey fool, that people have got eyes and not sightless sockets like that of yours to call you handsome.

Enter Warder in haste.

Warder: His Majesty the King, My Lord!

Krishna: (*Confused*) Where?

Warder: There, returned from the hermitage, My Lord, His Majesty is bound directly to the Princess's chamber, and has ordered me to show Your Lordship, thereto.

Krishna: Very well. (*To the Clown*) Well, dear comrade, I go there and permit you a goodly rest at home, for a while. Adieu!

Clown: Be thou victorious! Adieu!

Exeunt both.

Bedchamber: Subhadra asleep in her bed:
Saranganayana and Kusumavati attending:
Balarama standing aside.

Balarama: (To one of the attendants) How fares she?

Saranganyana: Just as before: Milady's sleep disturbed every moment. Milady startles up suddenly. When found again, after that surprising disappearance, I made myself bold to wake up the Princess, with a gentle shake; but the Princess simply screamed and stared vacantly, refusing, as it were, to believe in my bosom consolation and assurance, that she was safe in her chamber again.

Enter Krishna.

Krishna: (All confounded) Did she then say anything? Tell me her exact words.

Balarama: (With disregard) Isn't it a silly question? What of her words? The poor girl was all taken up by fright.

Krishna: Please, my good brother, I too realise it; but she was unseen for full three hours, and I think her stray utterances even may give us some clue to that puzzling disaster. I am absolutely at a loss to come to any decision.

Saranganyana: I crave Your Lordship's pardon, I cannot quite remember the exact words of Her Highness.

Kusumavati: But I do to the last syllable, My Lord.

Krishna: Marry! You say then.

Kusumavati: Your pleasure, My Lord.

Where's that knight in blood-stained clothes ?^{*} were Her Highness's exact words.

Krishna: God knows what she meant thereby ! It puzzled me the more.

Balarama: Well brother, you needn't worry so much about it. I have come to know it out and out.

Krishna: Oh, you have come to know it out and out - her sudden disappearance and the subsequent restoration, also ? Tell me soon, so that my sinister anxieties may pacify and stop vexing my mind for nothing.

Balarama: Thousand and one imaginings perplexed me too, on hearing the sad story, rending my heart in twain. Her possible suicide or Partha's elopement with her or your own trick to conceal her to avoid the marriage, that was against your wish. All these thoughts, one after the other, stunned me as if to death ! Let me be frank, even if I incur your displeasure, the last one I had, almost, ratified in my mind, dismissing the rest, on her mysterious restoration.

Krishna: And prithee, gentle brother, are you still labouring under that very suspicion ?

Balarama: (*Holding him by his hand*) Tut, tut ! The preceptor has well annexed it too.

Krishna: How ?

Balarama: As he puts it, the sylphs, very powerful and skilled in magic, keep on hovering watchfully, in the air, and just out of jest give such surprises to the world, particularly

at the time of marriage ceremonies, though without any devilish dodge behind except some poor grudge or the other against our bygone misdoings even unwittingly done to them. And to this effect, Myths give ample examples.

Krishna: Goodness! I hope they have no grudge against us in this instance! Did you get this point cleared from His Holiness, gentle brother?

Balarama: Yes, I did. His Holiness said, that their target was Duryodhana and if the groomsmen appease the Sylphs properly, there won't possibly be any trouble next time. So I have dispatched an earnest message to them and have come here.

Krishna: (*Delighted, aside*) O my Preceptor of the highest order! How skilfully hast thou disclosed the truth to our Royal Brother and hast saved me from vilification! Its beyond myself to repay these tremendous obligations, even if I mean to do so. O Guru! Boundless are thy affections! Life-giving elixir are thy words! There won't be found so powerful a liberator like thee, in the whole universe! (*Aloud*) Will you pardon me, gentle brother, if I ask you 'What made you suspect me of such vile trickery against your own honourable self?' I may be patronising the cause of Arjuna; but that shouldn't mean, that I am an ignominious traitor against my own gentle brother!

Balarama: Forget it now, O sweet. 'Tis human nature. Human mind is likely to lose

its balance, when overwhelmed by calamity. It may mix, involuntarily though, the best with the basest. Will you not forget this unpleasant matter? Almighty has saved us from and obviated every danger. The marriage, though postponed for four months, is well nigh fixed, but for a little penalty, that Duryodhana had to suffer a journey for nothing.

Krishna: That's a trifle as compared to our sister's health, worsening day by day and becoming a graver concern. Evil dreams have totally disturbed her goodly rest, and aversion to food has impaired her stamina. Wasting day by day, she has lost nearly half her lively lustre.

Balarama: Oh, I have forgotten to break a delightful news to you. There is an ascetic, come to stay in a cavern of the Raivataka, possessing some supernatural powers: such a one that our Holy Preceptor himself should profoundly praise him. That spiritualist has given this talisman to be tied on her right arm, and holy water to be sprinkled all over her body. These two chastening elements, as he says, are bound to emancipate her from every possible evil and apprehension, arising therefrom. This he has said, will revive her usual glow and restore her former health also.

Krishna: So! Then why delay the spiritual application? (*To an attendant*) Aye, make haste. Will one of you gently wake up our sister?

Kusumavati: It won't matter much to wake Milady, My Lord. Since long is she asleep.

(*Shakes her gently*)

Wake, O Gentle One, wake up please.

Subhadra sits up startled: Looks around in confusion.

Subhadra: Oh, where am I ? Where's that knight in blood-stained dress ?

Kusumavati: Here, My Lord ! Milady wakes up invariably with these words, as I said. (*To Subhadra*) Please, Milady, please look yourself in your own Palace. My Gentle Lady shouldn't say so now, Here Their Majesties to see Milady.

Subhadra glances at Balarama & Krishna.

Subhadra: Wel-come my most excellent brothers ! And why should you be standing : won't you have your seats ? (*To attendants*) You jades ! Did it strike you none to hie them seats ?

Attendants offer them seats: Balarama and Krishna accept them.

Balarama: Hail, dear sister, how do you do ? We care more for your health and not for these formalities so much.

Subhadra: My health ? And who told my gentle brothers, that anything was wrong with me ? I am all hale and hearty - drinking,

devouring and making merry. Don't you put me to shame thus, my noble brothers, by growing diffident about my health. I wish I were so lucky to get it really impaired and die of that too!

Balarama: You are so uncomplimentary, in vain! We have come to console Subhadra and not to blame her, knowing it too well to hold her responsible for the said mishap, at all.

Krishna: Look here good sister, our elder brother, in order to attest his sympathies, has secured for you a talisman and holy water from some saint of immense spiritual merit. And by their virtue you will be absolutely free from all hauntings of your heat-oppressed brain.

Subhadra: (*Aside*) I wonder, how these people think, that talismans or holy water or all put together would mitigate my afflictions! (*Aloud*) 'Tis so nice of you, sweet brothers. You are at liberty to treat me anyway you like.

Krishna: Swell fine! Don't you think, good brother, that the like of our sister's contentment is rare? She loves to feel for so sad a departure of Duryodhana and still she is good enough to reconcile herself to her unhappy lot - a ghastly obstruction in her own marriage!

Balarama: Naturally! She is sufficiently grown up to understand and appreciate everything.

Krishna: Very! Take heart good sister; this accursed Chaturmasya will just pass away to show you splendidly shining as the crowned queen of the Emperor Duryodhana. And then your conceit! Eh! Deign to wish us then?

Subhadra: (Frowns) Damn these acute tribulations! God save me from this headache!

Krishna: Come, be quick my brother, she suffers again; quick and treat her with those divine remedies, so that she may get some timely relief.

Balarama: Sure! (Looks to the curtain) Hey, who's there; bring me that talisman and the holy water; quick.

Enter a male attendant with the talisman and holy water in his hand.

Attendant: Here, My Lord.

Balarama sprinkles the holy water all over her body, and ties the talisman on her right arm.

Subhadra: (Aside) Goodness! goodness! These random remedies for ailments undiagnosed! I must, however, allow these nicities to them—the elders.

Balarama: Let not our talk hang over and restrain her sport with loving friends; come, brother; we go.

Krishna: Your obedient, brother, (To attendants) Well, good maids, we are going. Act

you up best to her will, and acquaint us with her least abnormality, which we are sure will not accrue now by the merit of this talisman and the holy water. (To Subhadra) Good-bye sister, for the present, good-bye.

(Subhadra nods.

Balarama: Well one thing more, sweet Krishna; I have determined to pay a visit and homage to His Holiness right now, and I wish you were with me; will you?

Krishna: Will it not suffice if you go alone, brother, without my appendage?

Balarama: Hush, our Preceptor ordains it. Come on.

Krishna: Who will violate that august order? Here I am ready to accompany you.

Exeunt both.

Subhadra: (To Saranganayana) Please go to arrange for my bath, Saranganayana, will you? I shall just follow you.

Saranganayana: Your order, My Lady.

Exit Saranganayana.

Subhadra: Good Kusumavati, see that the mischievous girl goes down, and latch the door behind her.

Kusumavati: Your pleasure, My Lady.

(*Exit.*

Subhadra: Oh, that odious Saranganayana!

Like wetted grain my soul ferments, within me, at her sight. Scandalous! She is always prone to poison my sister Revati's ears. And why blame her at all? Revati herself may have so appointed her, particularly to stalk me. Goodness, I must be very careful from hence, and refrain from waxing eloquent before that nasty pert. This Kusumavati, on the contrary, is everything to me, and she so profoundly grieves, as though in sympathy with some undeclared grief of her own. What else can a helpless girl do?

Re-enter Kusumavati.

Kusumavati: Driving her before me, My Lady, I have latched the door.

Subhadra: I was right then! Was she not crouching in the stairs till you reached, Eh?

Kusumavati: Pardon me, Milady, she cleared away only on seeing me.

Subhadra: O dear Kusumavati, when shall I be out of these depths? Will ever my yearning be fulfilled? Or why cherish that pleasant hope at all! Oh Heavens, am I born in a rich family only to be a life-prisoner, stranger to freedom and free will? Had I been born of a poor family I would not have been so mercilessly sacrificed.

Kusumavati: Console, pray, console my gentle Lady. Don't augment the anguish, that is already corroding your health these two days?

(Gently pats on her back.)

Subhadra: Then what do you expect me to do? (*With tears*) Is there any hope, that I should console myself? What divinity shall I invoke for help? Who will ward off or at least redress my grievance? Speak my friend, speak, and I shall surrender to him. My hopes are all shattered. In vain have I gushingly enreated my relations to help me. My poor parents, who alone entertain some compassion for me, are helpless on account of their age. These Yadavas, who *en block* had danced attendance on me and had so often humiliated self-respect to court my favour and do my will, have now turned traitors to me. Speak, friend, speak what shall I do? Oh speak.

Kusumavati: Believe me, My Lady, your intentions are sure to be fulfilled. It's only a question of little time. Have patience with the present misery, which will be but short-lived. Be sure, that success will sway at the breath of heaven, and to your side.

Subhadra: How do you predict it, my friend?

Kusumavati: Why, My Lady, when utter disappointment was staring in your face, only two days ago, Providence hath saved you from the doom. Your marriage has been postponed for four months more. And at His will, in a pretty long time as that, things may take a desirable turn. Isn't it so?

Subhadra: True! I too am wondering at that mysterious accident so much so, that I also am really inclined to think as you do.

But, alas, I have become nervous and I feel it all to be a dead dream.

Kusumavati: Will My Lady pardon me? Time and oft, I was swayed away for want of a chance. Shall I say it now? Pray, has My Lady got any reminiscences of her disappearance as such?

Subhadra: Why, I remember it too well, good Kusuma. You know so far, that I was lulled to sleep awhile in my chamber, don't you? And all of a sudden I found myself in a thick forest, when I woke up.

Kusumavati: My God, what does Milady mean? It's so surprising! Who the devil took Milady there?

Subhadra: Hear the fun. Methought first of all, that I was in our garden; and was so pleased with the idea, that I did spend a few moments quite happily, in those soothing environs. But gradually I began to feel the fall of the day. The shadows of the evening began to approach and cover me fast. And all alone at such a dismal time - none of you attending, I was confused completely and I cried aloud for you both.

Kusumavati: (*Shows fright*) And what then?

Subhadra: Then a handsome young man, in blood-stained vestures, appeared before me.

Kusumavati: Good gracious! Who might he be?

Subhadra: I did not ask him; but I only remember him to have said, 'Tis a terrible forest, not your tiny and tidy garden about you. I don't know how you happened to be here!'

Kusumavati: Do tell! Did he also not know anything about your being in the wilderness? A marvel surprising its precedent! What next, Milady?

Subhadra: I was shocked to hear him say so, and was apprehensive of being obscured in the forest, and of the consequent dismal chastisement, at the hands of my elder brother and his spouse. The shock was so rude, that I swooned; but on recovery, I found myself in my chamber again - all like a dream.

Kusumavati: Whether or not a dream is a question; your strange restoration was so real as to baffle our wits, while your obscurity was vividly true.

Subhadra: Let alone that. There are two more surprises for me.

Kusumavati: What are they, prithee, Gentle Lady?

Subhadra: First: the shawl! - I found a shawl on me, the very one, the very one I had presented to my love with love, while we were living here together. The very shawl, on which I myself had delicately embroidered his name, as my love's token. Second: the jewelled string, My Lord presented to me, was missing.

Kusumavati: Goodness! 'Tis a surprise on surprise, each ending in My Ladyship's favour.

Subhadra: What makes you say so?

Kusumavati: May be anything; but do depend upon it, Milady.

Subhadra: Pshaw! Is misery a necessary antecedent to luck? Why should my lover take a wayward fancy for an untimely pilgrimage to leave me thus desolate, and Lord Krishna, himself, lose affection for me? Does my elder brother announce good luck to me by favouring that son of the blind? And is it for my good, tell me, that sister Revati, a woman herself, has taken to encourage him in such a disgraceful affair, against my will?

Kusumavati: Cheer up, Milady, pray cheer up. Their Lordships, while they were here, seemed penitent at Milady's plight.

Subhadra: I know well, friend, that it is your bluff to please me only. They repent, eh? Why should they?

(With tears)

Did you not hear him blurting - him that Krishna, 'Tis only four months, and then you will shine splendidly in the vestures of the Crowned Queen of King Duryodhana, and then, your conceit stupendous! - Ah, that sting! And do you maintain, that such a diction befits penitence of a real, loving brother? - It behoves a butcher, not a brother. Knowing my heart well, he is still prone to peck at my wounds so cruelly. He himself had proposed My Lord!

Arjuna for me, and reared up my hopes, only to be betrayed inhumanly. His heart is as dark as his complexion! I repent to have entertained false hopes about him; he is as awful as a sinking prop!

Kusumavati: (*Aside*) No consolation for her, Oh Heavens! Her excitement increases at every word of solace. Some diversion may amuse her a little. (*Aloud*) I crave Milady's pleasure to show me that shawl, the mere mention of which multiplied my curiosity. Sure, it must be very fine.

Subhadra: There it is confined to that chest, that none should see it. But you can see, if you are so keen.

Kusumavati goes in and brings the shawl.

Unfolds and examines it closely,

Kusumavati: O the dexterity of Milady's fingers! How lovely is the pattern with birds interspaced! What a wonderful effect; I am afraid these birds would fly away any moment, My Lady!

Subhadra: (*Snatches it from her hand, & throws it on the ground*) I would like to tear assunder this wretched rag, you so much love to see. It so ruffles me to the quick.

Kusumavati: Peace, prithee Gentle Lady, what offence might this poor thing give to Milady?

Subhadra: Offence? This is the most notorious rag in the world, I should say.

absolutely insipid to abandon that bracing body, — the place inaccessible even for me, and to which I myself had so fondly raised it. What business had this miserable rag to fall from such a dignity; why should it, at all, have become disgusted with such an excellent company? — Barbarian! Go take it away from me and confine it to that dismal chest again.

(*Throws away the shawl.*)

Kusumavati: (*Carries out the order. Aside*) Every attempt to cheer her up fearfully contributes to her excitement. What help? (*Aloud*) Pray, milady, is not it high time to bathe? Will you, please, go with me and refresh at least a bit? A timely meal, too, as I think, will give you a good relief.

Subhadra: Damn those meals — that veritable venom!

Kusumavati: Well! If you loathe to have it, let us have a lively stroll in the garden; that in its turn may give good stomach to Your Ladyship.

Subhadra: Friend, I would have gladly accompanied you thither; but I shudder at the very idea; for —

When I see the garden,

My heart ablaze is set

By dormant separation,

Fuming in my chest.

Fragrance of a flower,
 Like the thrust of dart
 My brain doth truly shatter,
 Shooting pain athwart.

The cuckoo-strain is jarring,
 Like the lightning's crack doth crush.
 Infernal sparks seem jutting -
 Not spray - from the font's gush.

Branding is the breeze;
 Boring the sport of birds -
 Kissing of swans and geese
 ¶ Cock's dance his love towards.

It is not the garden,
 'Tis Cupid's dreary den;
 Font and flow'r - his cordon
 To kill me there and then!

Kusumavati: If Milady takes everything amiss and broods over agitating fancies, how can Milady expect to fare well? Will not My Gentle Lady divert her attention to some other soothing sorts, that really court to cheer up My Princess?

Subhadra: I do appreciate your advise, good friend, and reject it also. My peace is totally disturbed; it is beyond myself to bear this plight with cheer; I am absolutely left desolate

¶ Peacock's

to be consumed by the burning separation. None can long to live, with mind and hope both shattered. Tell me, good friend, are these brothers? Not at all! they are my real foes, wreaking vengeance on me, under the guise of affection and stripping the cores of my heart, as if with their sharp tongue. I am tired of such a life, happiness from which is wrenched by my relations. I beseech you, good friend, you at least will give me some hemlock, that I may drink of it and get rid of this miserable life. Help, help me, if you are my real friend.

Behind the curtain.

"Kusum, I say, aye Kusumavati, open the door, please."

Kusumavati: Who is bawling there?— Saranganayana?

Subhadra: Why comes the devil back again thus howling? Go, and see, please.

Exit Kusumavati.

Re-enter Kusumavati with Saranganayana.

Subhadra: Eh, what makes you hither again? Did I not order you to prepare for my bath?

Saranganayana: Yes, Milady! But pardon me, I was waiting for Milady well prepared; presently then, Her Majesty—Milady's Sister Junior—urged me to show Milady to the court

of the Tulasi-Vrindavana, immediately after Milady's bath. Mercy me, hence, this errand particular causes my intrusion.

Subhadra: Mean you Sister Rukmini?

Saranganayana: Yes! And Her Majesty requests Milady to be rather quick.

Subhadra: Marry, she has not altogether left me in the basket then; she remembers me, after a long time though! Come, good Kusumavati, come let us go.

(Both rise up

Kusumavati: Well, - Saranganayana, is Her Majesty ready?

Saranganayana: Since long, and may even be seen worshipping the holy Tulasi, where My Gentle Lady is urgently expected.

Subhadra: Well but why does she send for me in post-haste? Do you know?

Saranganayana: Excuse me, Milady, nothing besides this order does Her Majesty give out to me; but I guess, that Her Majesty wants My Lady, probably, to pay a visit to a hermit, brought to the palace by His Majesty in the state pomp and procession.

Subhadra: Any ground for your guess?

Saranganayana: Yes, My Lady, and a sufficient one too. I have the Chamberlain ordering his staff to announce, that all the eight mistresses and Royal Consorts are requested to pay their visits to His Holiness; holy attires!

Subhadra: Whatever it is, I must go and see her. Hurry up, good Kusumavati, and help me my bath; go Saranganayana and fetch me my holy clothes with other requisites, as occasioned.

Exit Subhadra and Saranganayana.

Kusumavati: This call on our Princess is quite opportune; or else, Heaven knows the height, this regal grief would have scaled. (Looks aside) Good God! Her Majesty has already begun worship in the Tulasi court-yard. I must see, that the Princess joins Her Majesty in time.

Exit Kusumavati.

Scene: Rukmini worshipping at the Tulasi-pedestal; attendants attending.

Rukmini: (Finishes her worship) Good Ashoka, give me my rosary.

Attendant hands it over. Covering it with her anchala Rukmini begins meditation.

Then enter the Clown in his holy dress; the Clown begins his observance, with the Achamana rites.

Rukmini finishes her meditation; rises up for Pradakshina: sees the Clown.

Rukmini: Meseems you had had your bath just here, eh?

Clown: I thought like honouring myself by bathing in some holy favours. That makes me here; that's all.

Rukmini: So! But I know, that you won't leave your habit of taking a late bath, and that too in spite of any ridicule or scolding even by his Majesty himself. Were you not scolded the other day, before all the people?

Clown: Not exactly so! But I crave your pardon, noble sister, it's only an accident! I had had my bath very early this morning; but while hurrying hither, my hasty step trod on the bitch of a tail, and hence is this contingency of late bath. Excuse.

Rukmini: Oh, I see! Your religiousness, is growing too fastidious nowadays, eh, isn't it? Well, what about this Holiness's affair?

Clown: All's well! His Holiness has finished up all his morning observances, and was being seen by the ladies. I am afraid His Holiness will breathe his last and will get his eyes frozen, uttering 'Narayana, Narayana!' in return of the homage of each and every one from the rushing fair worshippers.

Rukmini: All right, I shall be there with the Princess ere long that rush subsides completely.

Clown: As you please, sister.

(Prepares to go away)

Rukmini: Come, O holy Brahmana, deserve, please, this Daxina first and then go. (To an attendant) Present him this Tambula and Daxina.

The Attendant carries out the order.

Clown: Hem ! Somebody appears to be coming this way ! O our good Princess !

Exit Clown.

Then enter Subhadra, escorted by Kusūmavati both in holy dress.

Rukmini: Hail, dear sister, hail ! I must consider myself fortunate, to-day, that my good sister honours me so readily, and instantly following my word ! I was really diffident : I thought I was staking my prestige, as it were, when I sent for you. What go was there for me, had you dishonoured my word with a smart rebuff, " I may take my bath at my will, not now ! " Isn't it, dear sister ?

Subhadra: Why should you spare your tongue and be unlike others ? Have you not borne a bole to dispirit me ? Fair game ! Have you your pleasure unchecked, unmindful of my heart, which I have rendered harder than a stone ! Pray, go on, sister.

Rukmini: (Holds her by hand.) Enough of that ! Come have you a seat here first near me.

(Presses her to the bosom, coaxes

How lamentably are you reduced, only in a couple of days! Do you hope to recoup your health by ignoring regular food and comely rest and by brooding and brooding over self-caused commotions?

Subhadra: Heal thyself first, good sister, lest you succumb any moment to the profound weariness of exhausting attendance to me that is thrawling your rest and peace. How kind of you? Cursed be my calamity, that did not permit my courteous sister a moment's leisure! Oh, why did you trouble yourself so much to come to and waste your costly words of solace on me? I would forever remember you for all that.

Rukmini: My fault, pradon me, dear sister. Just imagine my state, on hearing of your sudden disappearance, at the nick of time of your nuptials; I had lost, as if all my strength: my voice failed; all impetuous evils possessed my mind. I pray God, I should never suffer thus to see even a foe in such a disaster!—Then came, with equal surprise, the news of your reappearance. I sprang up to my feet and rushed to your chamber, but I was strictly prevented by our Preceptor's prohibitive orders, that none except the Princess' attendants will be in the chamber, not even Their Lordships. I crave your pardon again, I was helpless thus and had to return disappointed with the only resolve to see you as you would improve. Pray, how could we have met then!

Subhadra: Paint, as you choose, sister; but the fact remains, as clear as the sun, that you are losing the fervour of love for me, nowadays.

Rukmini: Oh Gracious! what drives you to this conclusion?

Subhadra: The plain fact, that you have grown indifferent to the blasphemous overtures, putting me to utter shame.

Rukmini: Marry, O sister! you came to the point now! And you will surely pour on me your mighty wrath, if I give it out. You said blasphemy; what way are you being blasphemed? If you unnecessarily misconstrue the things to be amused at your own excitement, who will help it?

Subhadra: There you are sister! Did I not forget, that I am foolishly blaspheming your pious wishes, and misunderstanding the things? I myself am an ill bird to foul my nest and blame others for so doing. I love to discard the good will of you all and cling to my perverse desire.

Rukmini: Ah I see! It is not then, in your interest, you mean, that our brother-in-law has fixed up your marriage with Duryodhana and has suffered actually so much to bring it about! Good! Will anybody, the world explored, find a better match than this? What a great imperial power! Oh, his stupendous supremacy and magnanimous beauty withal! Is he lacking in anything, that you

should so desperately loathe to approve of him? You may take it ill now, but the day is sure to come, when we ourselves shall have to suffer humiliation, before this principal Queen and Empress. Do you follow me?

Subhadra: Yes, quite! But will you please hold up your praising tongue and stop prattling nonsense? You must be after your husband's soul, for certain. Don't differ from him in words even. Well, that son of the blind may be superior to Indra himself; I hate him. What good will you derive by bartering me to him and ruining my whole life perforce.

Rukmini: Tut, tut, tut! We women should not give vent to such unbecoming expressions.

Subhadra: Conforming to the ways of the world you must try to hush me up, for we look upon the pangs of others with indifference. But if I turn the tables, you will surely accuse me for finding fault. You will call me captious.

Rukmini: You bet! Pray, be frank.

Subhadra: Lend me your ear then. You were also once eligible for marriage, were you not? And you had a brother too, who in all wisdom had decided to offer you to Shishupala; he was too ugly, too feeble, too poor for you; and that is why you secretly found out a brahman bearer for your love-letter to Krishna and wooed him thus, even by a proxy. Isn't it so? Come now, and spare not a jibe to baffle me to submit to your will. Go on, gentle sister!

Rukmini blushes and gives no reply.

Go on, dear sister, and give me some more draught of your plausible advice, come.

Rukmini: Pardon me, dear sister. You are right to the nearest syllable of your retort. I was beating about the bush, because I am helpless.

Subhadra: Forget it, sister, and forgive me. I am sure, if you mean, you will influence your Lord, Krishna, in my favour. That's what I except of you. He is able to make me happy. Is he not?

Rukmini: Yes, indeed! But don't you think that I have spared any pains to plead in your behalf, before My Lord; but whenever I broach this topic, his lordly eyes expand in wrath and make my blood creep. How shall I help it?

Subhadra: Help it any way, kind sister, any way; but secure his promise by hook or crook for me, if at all you wish this poor helpless soul should live. Prithee be plain, but don't fool me by false hopes.

Rukmini: (*Presses her to the bosom*) Rest assured, my dear me, that my heart wildly breaks to see your deadly distress. Not to make a show, I only abstained from sullyng my lips with false promises. But depend on me now, good sister, that I shall not leave a single stone unturned.

Enter Clown in haste.

Clown: Come, quick you both. His Holiness is waiting only to do justice to the dishes before him. And our Liege Lord wants the Princess herself to offer him the Aposhana.

Rukmini: Well, let us go, sister, and pay our homage to His Holiness.

Exeunt all.

End of Act II.

ACT III.

Krishna and Balarama seated.

Attendants attending.

Balarama: Although I have come across with many of them, Krishna, never did I find the like of this hermit, at whose mere sight my heart overflowed with joy and I thought like being in his company all the while to forget the pangs of life. He was amazingly motiveless. O, his dispassionate inward gaze! it was as if fixed on the Supreme Soul. Regardless of self, he talked and smiled with us; but seemed lost, at the same time, in some divine thought, in the full spirit of some unheard peals of eternal bliss, nobly oscillating to its inspiring tunes.

Krishna: Blessed be your generosity, my dear brother. But you ignore his frolics, which prove, that he is nothing but a mushroom ascetic. Piety is made of a holier stuff; and he has not a shred of it.

Balarama (*Dissenting*) Infidel as you are, you are not ashamed to suspect even so stainless a saint. I pity your climaxing imprudence.

Krishna: Pardon me dear brother, I shall withhold my tongue, henceforth, if it so stirs

you. But I am prone to think and air my opinion, as his behaviour inspires within me.

Balarama: His behaviour again! His holy behaviour you are apt to vindicate, ay; will you reason for your vile vindication? Was he unlaudable any way?

Krishna: Yes exactly! He was unlaudable and eminently unfit to his creed. Did ever an ascetic behave like that? Listen. He was completely distracted at the mere sight of Subhadra. Let alone the slip of his rosary, But his very tongue slipped, and he was totally unconscious and indiscrete in his benedictions. And again his inward gaze, that you love to praise as steady, was obviously fickle and shameless to stare at the lovely face of my dear sister.

Balarama: (*Despicably*) How mean, how mean! That's why such Yogis are simply glad to prefer caverns to our reviling company. Not your own self alone, but mine also along with yours, you are dragging to the most filthy and putrid depths of sin in censuring such an artless ascetic an incarnation of self-abnegation. An astounding characteristic spirituality upbraided! Fie, fie on you! To be in the midst of society was so compromising for him, that he was all restless and had absolutely no fervour for the savour or flavour of the dish before him; his meek and hasty fingers fidgeted, as it were, in an unknown province and he actually mixed salt with ghee, squeezed lemon into the milk and so on. Do you mean these to be insignificant indications of absurdity? It

is disinterestedness! Not so much for their own pleasure as for our uplift, do the saints appear amidst us and grace us by their company, you see.

Krishna: At least, if not for you, his confusion strikes a suggestive key-note for me; sure.

Balarama: Let you loose your overwise tongue.

Krishna: Please don't be angry, dear brother, I am only interpreting my placid convictions. His absurdities were due to his infatuation for Subhadra as she served. And he was sure to take advantage of your good nature but for me, and would have given free scope to his sensuous pranks.

Balarama: Fie, fie on your beastly tongue! I should better call one a beast - one that has no ethical sense. In vain, have I lost his praise on you, in the manner of a skilled but foolish musician careless in wasting his sweetest songs on the barren ears of the dumb.

(Turns his back on Krishna.)

Krishna: Pooh! It's ado for nothing! He may or may not be a true saint; why should your brotherly blood be up at a plain talk? I am prepared to honour your surpassing experience and age. Will you be pleased with this assurance, to favour me?

Balarama: *(Without looking to Krishna)* Go to! How far a prig, that does not honour a

saint, will care to defer a mere elder brother?
'Tis evident!

Krishna: What's this, brother? It is improper for your affections to be so serious over a trifle. Only if I knew, that this would so offend you and that I would suffer so strong a punishment in your haughty anger, I would surely have refrained from speaking a word in this matter.

Balarama: (*Turns to him*) Bear in mind, sweet prig, that I have my aged impressions about your disposition, and they are well-formed too. You are always wont to provoke me by your naughty and vain contradictions to my sustained attitude, irritate me for nothing and feel delighted at my excitement, thus caused. Heaven and your good self alone know your intentions. I don't care for either.

Krishna: Prithee, noble brother, don't mind at all my impressions of this business. I regret to have harmed your sentiment. Here I sincerely beg your pardon, by your respectable feet.

(*Kneels down before him.*

Balarama: (*Delighted aside*) How nicely, the wag has digested this art also! (*Aloud*) Well, well, rise up dear; thy sweetness hath softened away my anger.

Krishna: (*Laughs, aside*) This very sweetness is to have great gravity, in times to come!

Balarama: Well Krishna I have some plan about this Yati in my mind. Not that I can't estimate your import, but I feel it my duty to have your counsel in everything I mean to do.

Krishna: In matters for discrimination, whatever they are, I only espouse the right cause, as you know it well, brother. Pray, tell me whatever it is.

Balarama: All right, hear me then. Just like treasures, we should not lose sight and advantage of meritorious company, if we luckily get it. I think it will be wise to entertain that Yati, for this religious period of Chaturmasya, at our's. It is an happy chance and a rare benefit of enjoying his spiritual sermons. I am rapturous at the very idea, that all our sins will vanish, just as the dismal dark does at the rise of the sun; I am sure, that his mere sight is enough to secure salvation of our life.

Krishna: Not a bad idea. We can afford to wait on and entertain thousands of such ascetics together, why one; not a bad idea; but —

Balarama: Why do you stop with your 'but'? Be frank and have your say?

Krishna: Be sure, brother, that my say is not so contradictory to yours, as you fear; I would like to amend only your hospitable plan with a slight variation. The only thing is, that instead of entertaining him at our's, we can manage best to treat him in that edifice

of God Shiva, situate by the seaside. We are out and out worldly, and his grand indifference to our worldly manners may perhaps suffer in the worldly abodes of people like us. We will surely manage to pay our reverential visits to him every day once, twice or as many times as you choose. Is not it feasible?

Balarama: Tcha ! Thus we deprive our families of their chance to see him often or at their leisure; and that very difficulty we overcome easily, when we induce him to stay in our own palace.

Krishna: Then, that mansion in the garden, behind the seminary, near by our palace; will it not do for him? I hope this should solve your problem of constant visits to him by our family.

Balarama: How silly ! what an unworthy place you select for a sage like him? Look here, such a gem must always be the care of our eye. My motive, however, is altogether a different one.

Krishna: So ! What's it?

Balarama: You must have marked, that Subhadra nowadays tends to be curiously saucy. She was so meek and submissive till recently. I, therefore, want to engage her in the efficacious services of this Yati, so that her present temperament softens and her reason cultivates to accord her hearty consent to our proposal of her marriage with Duryodhana. If this were to be achieved, not only should he

have his quarters in our palace, but he must be accommodated in the very inner apartments of Subhadra. This alone will facilitate her attendance on him.

Krishna: Hem! In your opinion, it may be good, but I totally dissent from you. It is absurd, that any hermit, in the first place, should be lodged in our sister's boudoir to be served by herself. No, it won't do! Will ever a highwayman be appointed custodian of our treasury? Pooh!

Balarama: (*Shows his resentment*) Goodness, goodness, goodness! You have poured, as if, boiling oil into my ears. Curse be unto you, that have such mean ideas, to equal and compare a sinning humanity with a spiritually great personality like him.

Krishna: Prithee, forgive me my audacity; O gentle brother, I think my silence to be inopportune and leading to serious consequences. I prefer, therefore, a little violation of seemingly decorum to untimely silence, because I anticipate actual troubles. So often, as you know, ascetics even more powerful than this one, have fallen from the heights of their penance at the shortest association with, nay, at the mere sight of youthful wenches. Are you going to lend a deaf ear to the Muse of History? Vishvamitra abandoned his sustained penance at the very voluptuous sight of Menaka in spring; Parashara was tempted to enjoy a fisher-girl even in a boat; and why, take even Vasishtha: he bartered his holiness to shameless

craving for his own daughter-in-law. Hark unto me, gentle brother, if such great men as these have utterly lost their greatness, what of this young fungus of asceticism? His pompous behaviour proves him to be some flimsy actor trotting on the stage, his head crowned with a customary shawl wrought with gold and wound in a fashionable swell, his rosy chati despicably rustling while he treads, his meek fingers craftily going over the jewelled rosary. And again whenever he poses meditation, hypocrisy betrays him and bursts open on his face. Howsoever he makes up to be a mendicant by his bold stripes of Bhasma, that he so carefully designs all over his bare parts, and by arranging his Rudrakshas as tidy decorations over them; and by adorning his ears with bright quartz Kundalas playing in beautiful harmony with his gait, while his sandles converse clatter with the ground all along, and his three staves add well to the show. He appears to take a lot of care, over every one of these details. Doesn't this prove that he is out and out a fiend? I do dissent from you, whether or not you like it?

Balarama: Do you suppose, Krishna, that youth and beauty cannot be coupled with renunciation? Take it from me then, that this world is a curious admixture of good and evil, right and wrong, and is prone to baffle ordinary wits. But real wisdom will never fail to distinguish right from wrong! Do you mean that none has as yet completely liberated himself from the clutches of carnality? Shuka got all the better of such vicious temptations of

Rambha, the divine damsel, who had so successfully lured away many a man to corruption, but whose illusive wiles were hollow before his continence. Then take another example of God Shiva Himself: Not only did he not fall a prey to carnality but he actually burnt to ashes Madana that captivates the heart of each and every sentient without an exception. Again no woman has strength to influence Kartikeya or Hanumana. And if you want a living monument of celibacy and renunciation, remember Grand Bhishma, the most precious jewel of the Mother Earth. These are vivid facts. But I know your perversity, and I may disclose it but for your displeasure.

Krishna: Why be constrained? I don't remember, that my gentle brother has ever displeased me. Pray, open it.

Balarama: Shall I? Listen. Every one in the world is inclined to weigh others by one's own scales and moreover, it is ever beyond the perception of thieves and paramours to believe that there breathe under the sun creatures, that scoff at wealth and woman. Do you follow me?

Krishna: Say whatever you like. I still think it every way unwise to allow young Subhadra to be in constant communion with any young man, may he be a Yati. I am afraid it will lead to great disasters.

Balarama: Come what may, I am not going to budge an inch from my resolve.

Krishna: Just as you please. My duty was simply to suggest, and that I have done. I warrant, that you will not hold me responsible for any of the consequences of your unlaudable scheme.

Balarama: All right! Here I move to make arrangements, accordingly.

Krishna: Cheer you.

Exit Balarama.

Krishna: (*Delighted*) Full excellent has been the colouring of this medley, so much so that never will my brother suspect this hermit of any misdoing. Forgive me, my soul, for my conceit, that makes a perfect dupe of my own brother—a mind as pure, as chaste and as unaffected as the holy water of the Ganges. (*Ponders.*) Nay, it is no deceit at all. The blissful end will surely justify it, apparantly crafty though it may appear. Let it go. I shall enjoy the real felicity of a goodly rest only to-day. My scheme is developing well, without any impediment. The success is almost mine. I must find out a rest, that would replenish my mind with warm, warm amusement. Shall I then go to Satyabhama's or shall I enjoy the charming association of Rukmini? (*Thinks*) Oh, the latter for recreation! (*Takes a few steps*) But I shouldn't expect any fun there, for she must be angry with me for my long absence. If I were to learn the pleasure of her sweet smiles, it will surely cost me a plenty of pardon,

cajoling entreaties and thousands of caressing excuses. But I am going there and there only.

(Looks to the curtain)

Oh lo, all absorbed, I have neared the proximities of her mansion, to which the title 'Laxmi-Vilas' befits well. Oh, the surging storm of niceties at such a late hour! I think this palace will vie with Vaikuntha itself for all this swarm of adept attendants, alert in making every sort of comfort for my beloved! See, some are cooling the terrace with rose-water, while some are busy sprinkling water over the khus-window-curtains; there are some preparing perfumed cosmetics; here a bunch is lost in arranging *tambulas* in the salver and there a bunch, taken up by abundant floral decoration and scenting. I am swayed away by their indulgence! O, what a galaxy of music! I dare not disturb such a concord by thrusting myself in. I shall, therefore, stand out and feast my ears with this splendid harmony for a while and slowly introduce myself in.

Exit Krishna.

Rukmini in bed, listening to music.

Rukmini: (Hears the music for sometime) O good Kokila, bid them all go away now and rest. I am all the more uneasy and my mind is growing wilder still. Sleep alone may perhaps pacify these sinister whirls. Cover me, therefore, and you too go to bed, if you find me lulled.

Kokila covers her.

Kokila: (*To musicians*) Well, good artists, wind up your business now, immediately, and go home, as powerful slumber overwhelms Her Gracious Ladyship.

Exeunt all except Kokila.

Kokila: (*Finds Rukmini asleep*) Miraculous ! she's fast asleep so soon, I may, now, do the same.

(*Turns to go; looks to the curtain; stops.*

My God, His Lordship comes this very way ! What shall I do now ? This fix is heavenly ; it will wake at my hand the very punishment !

(*Approaches Rukmini again*

My Lady, Oh My Gentle Lady ! Good Gracious, she dose not wake ! what's to be done now ?

Then enter Krishna.

Krishna: (*To Kokila*) Hey how now ?

Kokila: (*Joining her hands*) Pardon me, My, Lord, Her Ladyship is just asleep.

Krishna: Asleep, so soon ? Goodness ! hey, did Her Ladyship burn the midnight oil any of these days ?

Kokila: Yes, My Lord, almost all Her Ladyship's nights are sleepless now a days, because of My Lord's conspicuous absence for an unexcusably long time.

Krishna: (Aside) This cunning maid definitely makes a prologue to the coming broiling of my love's sweet anger ! *(Aloud)* Will you please announce me to your gracious Ladyship and see, if she wakes ? If not wake her with a gentle shake.

Kokila: (Approaches the bed again) His Lordship, My Lady, His Lordship ! Please wake, O wake.

Rukmini: (Gets up vehemently : frowns at the maid) You devil ! how could you not tolerate my long denied sleep ; I was just on its borders: didn't you see that ?

Kokila: Mercy me!

(Points at Krishna,

My Lord-!

Rukmini: (Gets down abashed) Well, Kokila is it not too hot here to get any sleep ? Why did you not take me to the summer-house ? Come, good maid, let us go there, now at least, and try —

Krishna: Marvellous, marvellous idea ! Thereto we go with you. This is not at all a fit place in such a hot season. And besides —

Look those clouds have seized the sky
And covered lovely stars well nigh,
Thundering bolt's incessant flash
Doth daze the eye; and drops eye-lash.

As in the fair sky above,
So in the realms of mellowed love,
These ethereal tumults havoc score,
Grieving forlorned loves the more.

Rukmini: (*Eyes a bit askance*) Very! My Lord ought to have gone, therefore, to mitigate the pangs of some other forlorned pet. What forced My Lord here to disturb my sleep?

Krishna: Pardon me, Sweet One! my sincere love to you shouldn't give room to your ire. It was, in fact, due to some preventions that I was unfortunately deprived of your embracing pleasures. Will you not pardon me? O don't be angry -

O, do not wrathful be,
Mercy have on me!

Furious passion dreary,
Shakes your frame aweary.

Though many wives me thrill
You alone I love still,

O Honey!

Knowing all full well,

Why should your ire so swell?

Wheresoever I stay,

To me but thou dost sway.

Your love for me

Do not end so rudely,

O Honey!

Rukmini: (*Aside*) O Graciousness ! Who can, on earth, resist such captivating tongue ! I am, by my soul, in its meshes. (*Aloud*) Such illusions may have duped me enough, before; but they will have no effect on me now. This time, I am so stubborn that I won't be satisfied till I see My Lord's deceit receives its just punishment.

Krishna: (*Smiles*) Hem ! Then why should that punishing spontaneity delay in laying her harassing hand on me ? Its all upto you. Come -

Tie your hands around me
Till they sorely wound me.

Hold me by my hair,
Bite my cheek, O Fair;

Pierce your speary breast,
Hurt me; that's for my sins

Punishment best !

(*Embraces her.*)

Exit Kokila.

Rukmini: (*Blushes*) - Heavens ! When love-
rounds up thus - !

(*Sits on the couch by the side of Krishna.*)

Krishna: Why vex in vain, and mar the pleasure of oneself and of other's too ? Don't, you realise my embarrassments ? My dear me, first of all this fuss of marriage affair and,

subsequently, dear Subhadra's malady - all those things took me up so much that I was not myself, you see Dear!

Rukmini: I know My Lord's sincerity in either of these affairs. Be it as it may; but I for certain must know, particularly, about our sister's marriage, provided My Lord has that gracious mood to be free and frank with me. It essentially concerns me.

Krishna: I think it's too late to go on discussing such things now, isn't it?

Rukmini: Well, I don't care so much for the late hour as for your immediate response.

Krishna: Why don't you ask me (and finish up soon, then?

Rukmini: Hear unto me, My Lord, our dear Sister's marriage has become a complete mess so to say. As I deem, and rightly too if My Lord does not intervene at this stage to rectify the matters, it will surely lead to serious consequences.

Krishna: Mess! And serious consequences! Well what do you mean? I don't think there is anything amiss; and I assure you, that the ceremony is but fixed at the end of this Chaturmasya.

Rukmini: Your Lordship may be resting assured of anything, and anything ignominious too; but does My Lord's dear sister - the principal party concerned, whom My Lord poses to love - consent to that fixture?

variety of sentiments, make the life dull, and look again, no talk of whatsoever a strain can taint or affect us in the least.

Subhadra: (*Aside*) Long since an ardent curiosity has been impelling me to know the past of His Holiness; but could get no suitable opportunity. It's a fine time now and I shall make bold, therefore, to question His Holiness about it.

Arjuna: Oh, what makes you silent Subhadra! Perhaps, I fancy, a new poetical conceit to outwit me.

Subhadra: I have been, rather deeply revolving in my mind to ask Your Holiness about something, for doing which I crave Your Holiness must not, please, be angry with me.

Arjuna: Oh, why Subhadra! You may freely ask me anything, and not in the least shall I be offended.

Subhadra: Your Holiness, if all things conspire to fashion themselves, smoothly, there is, I fancy, much happiness even in this mundane world of ours. A beautiful wife, unfluctuating wealth and a meritorious son do make the home sweet and happy, and one's happiness is doubly heightened to sweeten and enlighten the life, if one gets a grand-son; one then will be apt to discard the bliss of heavens even. Why then, I humbly crave to know, did Your Holiness chose to renounce the world, in the very prime of life ?

Arjuna: Subhadra, it's altogether wrong to conceive of happiness in the worldly life. For worldly happiness is but a delusion, and people nothing but deceive themselves, - like a foolish child that sucks its own thumb besmeared with its own saliva, and delights as if it is sucking its mother's breast.

Subhadra: It is so, no doubt; but so great an aversion for the world is not born with the man; it doth need some cause to engender it. Will Your Holiness tenderly deign to confide the reason, that brought on His Holiness to face the crisis.

Arjuna: Oh pity! I am overwhelmed with sudden emotion. Still, I shall try to unbosom it to you. I had a beautiful cousin, and we fell in love with each other. Her brothers did appreciate it and encouraged us till this time; but, alas, they chose to break their promise after all.

Subhadra: (*Aside*) Oh heavens! How surprising is this? Brothers in the world are all alike, meseems, - all unparrelled wickedness and cruelty, - immensely mercenary and look only wealth in their brothers-in-law, and don't care to see whether he possesses a bit of virtue. (*Aloud*) But did your cousin keep up her plighted troth or she also turned the sails with her brothers?

Arjuna: Oh! Forget that. She is, for sooth, of inestimable worth and its very rare and hard, indeed, to find the like of her. She left food and dried her blood with the heat

of separation from me. Her brothers called her insane, shut her in a dungeon and tyrannized her variously. And with all these oppressions, she did not change, but did abide by her determined love for me—love so pure and chaste !

Subhadra: (*Aside*) Brava, noble girl, Brava ! Thou art a veritable kin of mine, ordained to cruel fate. Methought, that I alone was created to be miserable, but now there seemst to be another soul, created to endure a similar doom. (*Aloud*) Well then, what happened next ?

Arjuna: What else but this : The more she persisted in her resolve to wed me, the more obdurate and confirmed became her brothers in their intent to deny her her wish. Dismayed thus, I betook myself to asceticism and set out on a pilgrimage, instantaneously.

Subhadra: Oh, most revered Holiness, how amazingly parallel are our tales ! I simply feel that we are mates in suffering, save the only difference, that Your Holiness made an end by sundering yourself from the world, while myself am still smouldering in the consuming heat of this anguish and agony.

Arjuna: Well Subhadra, pray, enlighten me more about the import of your words, " How amazingly parallel - ".

Subhadra: Just imagine me in the plight of your cousin, Holiness, and nothing more needs be said.

Arjuna: Dear me! But who is the blessed soul, for whom you are pining, like my cousin ?

Subhadra: Hark unto me, Holiness. It's he, whose name is Vijaya - the son of King Pandu and Kunti, the daughter of Yadu; the brother of Dharma and Bhima; and to him - to that world-renowned archer - did I dedicate myself, and won't now be faithless to him, even if my throat were to be butchered. And if I crave anything in the world now, it is Your Holiness's blessing, that my noble resolve ever remains unshaken.

Arjuna: All His blessings on you, and I pray, He will never leave your perseverance unrewarded. (*Aside*) My joy! There is no doubt that remains uncleared, now. I must presently acquaint her with the truth and elope with her right now; yet I will not do so. I shall wait a little more and amuse myself with whatever fun I shall meet with.

Subhadra: Pray Holiness, haven't we taken sufficient rest to move towards the cave?

Arjuna: Oh Subhadra, the cave is just before you. This is the very cave, where I have spent some of my happy days as an ascetic.

Subhadra: Oh Joy! This cave is carved to have every possible comfort and convenience of a sweet home!

Arjuna: But none of them existed before my arrival here. Some of my imperial votaries have done them afterwards.

Subhadra: Oh, what a fine pandal! It but suggests to me of some nuptials that must have been celebrated here and very recently too!

Arjuna: Or perhaps preparad for some such impending celebration, will be a sweeter and a more plausible expectation, will it not?

Subhadra: Please, Your Holiness, I am eager to go in and explore this cave. May I do so? There's no fear of wild beasts crouching inside, I hope!

Arjuna: Not at all! You can safely do your will.

Subhadra: But all the same I pray, that His Holiness will please be here in this pandal, until I return.

Arjuna: As you please, Subhadra.

(Sits down.)

Subhadra enters the cave.

Arjuna: It's a splendid moment to reveal myself! Shall I then tell her my true story and bear her away to my sweet home? But nay! Unfortunately, I am unarmed and hence defenceless to ward off the attack of the Yadavas, if involved. What shall I do now?

Re-enter Subhadra with a bundle, a bow and an arrow in her hands.

Subhadra: Look here, Your Holiness, I

found all these things in the remotest nook of the cave. Please see, what they are.

(*Puts before him the bundle.*

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Bravo, bravo ! I am lucky to get these arms now. It's my own costume and these are my own arms, which I had discarded, some time back, to be an ascetic and had left them in a dark corner of this very cave. I had cleanly forgotten them, but my beloved, at last, brings them to light. Oh sweetness ! I shall not be scared away now, aught may happen. (*Aloud*) Methinks, dear Subhadra, some heroic Prince may have left them here.

Subhadra: (*Unties the bundle, inspects all clothings and ornaments.*). Your Holiness, I am sure, that I have seen these beautiful adornings and this handsome costume, too, some time; but cannot say definitely where and when.

Arjuna: May perhaps be the belongings of Arjuna, your lover ! It is rumoured, that he has been wandering in disguise.

Subhadra: (*Aside*) From His Holiness's past and affable manners, a curious hope impells me to conclude, that His Holiness himself is my own Lord Arjuna. (*Aloud*) Your Holiness, a secret craving is swelling in my heart, since long. I beseech His Holiness, therefore, that His Holiness should fulfil kindly that sweet longing of mine.

Arjuna: Very well, Subhadra, speak it, for

I shall liberate you from that suspense, by my troth, to-day.

Subhadra: Your Holiness, I have been worshipping you, like a devoted votaress worshipping God Himself; and in that sublime spirit, I do cherish now to put this costume on you and gladden my eye to see Your Holiness in that divine form, just in the manner of devotees, who more than often put various garbs on their idols and are happy to see Him, in that characteristic.

Arjuna: (*Aside with delight*) Oh good luck! You are so fond to enrapture me to-day as you were to put me to shame and distress some days ago.

Subhadra: (*Picks up a dhoti from the bundle*) Please, wear this first.

Arjuna wears it.

Subhadra: And now, do I lay these ornaments and this costume on your graceful person.

(*Does accordingly; gazes at him: turns her face abashed.*)

(*Aside*) O Jo! He resembles just the Lord of my soul, in every respect! Goodness, is he not the same—he, on whom my enamoured eyes were fixed? Is this not the very personation of my heart's idol? Oh Subhadra, don't be silly to deceive yourself by mere semblance! Many a face may be exactly similar to one another.

Arjuna: Oh, why does Subhadra turn her beaming face and stand still? Has she finished up?

Subhadra: (*Faces him*) Yes, almost; but for a missing shawl, which is a necessity.

Arjuna: Well then, what matters it? My Chati will do for the present.

Subhadra: (*Recollects : Aside*) O my own shawl alone will reveal him - my lover - perfectly. (*Aloud*) No, never. I have got my own shawl, which His Holiness will, please, wear. Here it is.

(*Hands over the shawl.*

Arjuna: (*Releases the fold of the shawl and delights*) Oh, it absolutely stuns me. There is no doubt, it is the same as my cousin presented to me, complicating my name in its laborious broidery, she had herself wrought. (*Jokingly*) But how comes it now to be the possession of this girl? I wonder!

Subhadra: (*Hangs down her face in delightful abashment : Aside*) Sure, he's none else but My Lord himself! (*Aloud*) Perhaps this poor girl may be His Holiness's cousin herself and may thus possess it.

Arjuna: (*Approaches her and puts his hand around her shoulder*) Oh, I don't understand what you mean, Subhadra!

Subhadra: (*Removes his hand*) Are you still pleased to keep me in this torturing suspense?

Arjuna: Well dear, I am glad to return your courtesy, by presenting to you something else. Come, have this jewelled necklace.

(Puts it around her neck.

Subhadra: (Stares with surprise at it) Dear me, it's the same as one, that my Love had presented to me with great affection. (Jokingly) And how the devil now happens to be with His Holiness ?

(Looks down and smiles.

Arjuna: O, thou Elixir of my life, My Love ! Here, by the Earth, the Water, the Light, the Wind and the Sky - by these five elemental forces, (Takes her by her right hand) this manly and valiant Partha - your lover, my dear me, weds you this day in the name of Religion and Life ! Leave off all doubts and embrace me, my love.

(Embraces her.

Subhadra: (Embraces him and rests her head on his bosom.) Too much have I tortured you and have pained you, in vain. It's I, that forced you to take recourse to this garb of ascetics and have thus humiliated the very gallantry to the censure of the world. And with all this you have forgiven me to make me happy.

Arjuna: Oh, forget it dear ! Whatever is, is for the good - for our absolute good. The very struggle enhances our meeting, as that of Rati and Madana. Emerging from the furnace.

of separation, both of us are eternally united, just like two pieces of red-hot iron, that get merged into each other by the property of heat. And the career, moreover, of our love has been rendered so romantic, that it will become an endearing memory of eternal Poesy and the sublime scope of Drama.

Subhadra: Very ! My Lord, its so astonishing and stunning, in sooth, particularly this interchange of your shawl with me, and my necklace, with you !

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Now I can release to my Love facts about it.

(*Whispers the episode in her ears.*

Subhadra: O, I see ! That's how I feel to have seen you in that jungle. And although I could not completely recognize you then, your face all dripping with blood, and myself all engrossed in my own grief, still I thought, it were you. But can you, My Lord, account for the demon, that bore me thither, or for my safe return to my dormitory ? I am at a loss to make it out.

Then enter Rakshasa.

Demon: (*Joins hands*) My Lord, I am the author of that mystery and have worked out the disappearance of the Princess, in conformity with the plans of Lord Krishna, - to save her from falling in the hands of Duryodhna, just at the nick of time of her marriage, - and

her safe return afterwards, leaving for you the purse, that contained the letter together with the necklace taken off from the Princess' neck.

Subhadra: Good Gracious ! What an amount of censure have I heaped on benevolent Krishna who had done such a munificent turn to me !

Demon: Here your child Ghatotkacha, my dear Uncle and Aunt, bows to you both.

(Bows down.

Arjuna: O dear, Ghatotkacha - the son of Bhima, O come child, embrace me. (*Embraces him.*) I am so sorry to have made you bleed that time.

Demon: Forget it, Dear Uncle, I was joyed at that, on the contrary.

Arjuna: My dear me, thy father will be overjoyed at this turn thou hast done to me.

Subhadra: (*Embraces Arjuna again*) O My Lord, you should better have taken recourse to some other means than this asceticism. Why did you so subject yourself to the ridicule of the world ?

Arjuna: Why, I carried out your suggestion only, dear !

Subhadra: O Graciousness ! My suggestion - did I suggest you to do so ?

Arjuna: Sure ! And I can evidence my oral accusation by your own script. Here you are.

This epistle found in the self-same purse, left by Ghatotkacha with your necklace in it. This is your hand, isn't it?

(*Hands over the letter.*

Subhadra: (*Reads the letter*): Very! But I never wrote it, although it resembles my hand.

Enter suddenly Krishna.

Krishna: Good Sister, don't be puzzled. I wanted Arjuna to be your leige-lord, and to contrive well that plan, I myself forged this letter; pardon me.

Subhadra: (*Hides herself bashfully behind Arjuna.*)

Krishna: (*Faces Arjuna*) Glory to my friend, that has won his wife, at last, after an amount of struggle!

Arjuna: Pardon me! I trust, my dear Krishna will pardon me. Not knowing such a bracing secret, I have reproved him - my benefactor, my Krishna! I apologise.

Arjuna and Krishna meet and embrace.

Subhadra: (*With tears, bows to Krishna*) I have no words to thank my noblest Krishna for his obligations; they are so immense!

Krishna: (*Caresses and wipes out her tears.*) Forget it, dear. I did my duty and verily in my own cause. Please, don't mention it.

Subhadra: But another danger now confronts you, dear brother. How will you reconcile our elder brother?

Krishna: Let not your benignity be disturbed by that thought. It's enough, if you simply follow me. Now Ghatotkacha, take all these implements of asceticism to the foot of this mountain and protect this couple, without forgetting my instructions, in times of need.

Demon: Your obedient!

Exit Ghatotkacha with Chati and Dandas.

Krishna: Well, Partha, return to your original place with your consort. I am going.

Exit Krishna:

Arjuna: Sweet one, let us retrace our steps to declare our union openly before Balarama.

Subhadra: I am ready.

(Both walk a little.

Oh, my heart is sinking fast at the very idea of his terrible wrath.

Arjuna: Go to! What the hell I care for that, while I am armed with my blessed bow. I shall thus defy Yama - the Death himself!

Exeunt both.

A big row behind the curtain "O help, double up, help!" Then enter Balarama, brandishing his mace, listening to the uproar.

Balarama: O Hell, why are they uproaring: what's the cause? Hey, who's there?

Then enter a Rakshasa with joined hands

Lambakurcha: The worst tidings of its sort, Your Majesty, and still it cannot be kept a secret.

Balarama: (*Alarmed*) Speak, speak first! What befalls our bad lot?

Lambakurcha: The Princess, - Subhadra, Your Majesty, has been borne away by that hypocrite - the hermit.

Balarama: (*Rushes at him in wrath.*) And where were you and your squadron - all dead? Were the armed guards dozing? What had happened to you, you shameless effeminate unuch? Wait, I shall just blow you up, at the mouth of the gun, for such a grave offence as this. Hey, who is there, my chariot, my chariot, soon! I shall turn down the whole world or pull down the heaven; but shall not leave that wicked scoundrel - that hermit - unfound. Where will he go, on earth?

Then enter Krishna.

Krishna: Hail, all hail, brother! Well, what's the fun? Why are you so enraged from tip to toe?

Balarama: Don't you know it still? Wonder! That wretch of a hermit has borne away Subhadra.

Krishna: This was a foregone conclusion, that I had drawn. But who told you this?

Balarama: (*Faces Krishna with rage.*) Ah, I see! It's all out and out your trick, Krishna. I know it thoroughly well, that you are always wont to foil every one of my plans. Let go. I am damnably tired! Let this world and this kingdom go to the hell! I shall hide my face behind that asceticism and renounce all this bother of life. Hey, who's there? Go and prepare for my initiation to the Sanyasa.

Then enter a servant with all the requirements for Sanyasa.

Servant: Here, Your Majesty, are these requisites.

Balarama: Damned be your wickedness, Krishna! You have keenly kept all this equipment already ready, Eh, to send me to the forest!

Krishna: Peace, my revered brother! Why should you pass such a stricture, without knowing the fact, that the servant has not yet told?

Balarama: (*With contempt*) Hear him yourself.

Krishna: (*To the servant*) Hey, what do you want to say, be plain?

Servant: Your obedient! Your Majesty will know, that this garb of an ascetic was found by Lord Satyaki at the foot of the mountain, while His Lordship was in search of the Princess. His Lordship ordered me ahead with.

this, and will follow me just now with the detailed knowledge of this mishap.

Then enter Satyaki.

Satyaki: Glory to their Lordships! I bear a delightful tidings.

Balarama: (*Consoled*) Speak first, speak, O Child Satyaki.

Satyaki: A quite young and heroic Prince has saved the Princess, who may now be descending down the slopes of this mountain together with the rescued. He has smartly punished the ascetic, wrested from him his habits and thrown them down. I have already managed to send them for the inspection of Your Majesty.

Balarama: How glad am I! Who may he be, Satyaki?

Satyaki: I am sorry! I cannot define him exactly, as I have viewed him from a long distance; but I feel certain, that he must be King Duryodhana.

Balarama: Whosoever he may be; I vouchsafe forthwith to offer my sister to him.

Krishna: Wait, wait my brother; think well before you leap into this gulf of promise again, as you cannot deny your word to King Duryodhana. He must be depending on your pledge.

Balarama: Go you. If this hero is Duryodhana himself, it's well and good; if he is

Kusumavati: (*Approaches Saranganayana*) My misfortune, what else ? That devil always fashions to be so noisy and turbulent, in the absence of our Gentle Princess.

Saranganayana: Sure; we must then be under the evil influence of saturn; and I think, that the Providence hath sent him in the from of this wretch to our utter misery ! The sooner he quits these peaceful precincts the better !

Kusumavati: Speak gently, you wicked girl, speak gently for God's sake ! If this demure catches us, he will immediately report to the Princess.

Arjuna: (*By signs merely, asks the whereabouts of Subhadra : Repeats*) Narayana, Narayana !

Saranganayana: (*Aside*) What a hell of 'Narayana, Narayana !' Damn it, what the devil he means by that loathsome repetition in season and out of season ? He makes it ghastly difficult by that to understand him any way.

Arjuna: (*Gesticulates as before angrily*) Narayana. Narayana !

Kusumavati: (*Approaches him gently*) Mercy me, Your Holiness ! I sincerely beg Your Holiness to speak in plain and articulate terms, for I am not so well-versed in the gesture-language, unfortunate as I am.

Arjuna: (*Wrathfully*) Get you gone, you both. I don't want either of you. Narayana, Narayana !

Kusumavati: (*Aside*) O Goodness, it comes to me now ! He wants the Princess alone. (*Pleased, aloud*) My Gently Lady ? She'll just be coming; or why, I shall just send for Milady, Your Holiness.

Arjuna: (*Nods*) Narayana, Narayana !

Kusumavati: Go, good friend, hasten Her Ladyship hither.

Saranganayana: All right.

Exit Saranganayana.

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Happy will I be, if that lovely lady follows this message; or else my vehemence will betray me.

(*Listens towards the curtain,*

I do hear some steps. O, verily, they are my beloved's ! But I shall now pretend anger and sit irresponsive to her gentle askings, as she has actually vexed me for some time unnecessarily by her tormenting delay.

(*Sits thus prepared.*

Enter Rukmini.

Rukmini: (*Hurrying upto Kusumavati*) Aye, why are you idling here, Kusumavati ? Don't you know of the boisterous activities, that are going on in the Palace ?

Kusumavati: I humbly beg Your Ladyship's pardon, I am quite ignorant of what My Lady says, as I am fixed up here, since early morning.

Arjuna: (Looks towards Rukmini with an attitude of horror. *Aside*) Just as a sudden outburst of fire should outwit a man, who takes resort to the shade of some shadowing cloud, expecting a cooling shower of rain, so this heralding tongue outwits me and foils my lucid longing. I must, therefore, be very wary now.

Rukmini: Don't worry, Kusuma; I shall let you know it. They are awfully busy there, because the day of the Princess' marriage is now fixed for certain; and the Lord Preceptor has asked to finish up with the rites preliminary to it, and also the grand feast just to-day. Go, therefore, hurry up and help the Princess in her bath.

Kusumavati: Is it then, that Her Ladyship won't turn up here to tender her cordial offices to his Holiness?

Rukmini: She won't, by troth! and she has, moreover, some other occupation. Besides, the Sun enters a new sign tomorrow, offering us a rare opportunity for religious observances, and the Lord Preceptor, further, bids us go to the sea for ablutions. We have instructions to see off His Holiness also, with due completion of his Chaturmasya there and there only.

Arjuna: (Shows fear. *Aside*) Alas! that day comes off to-morrow - the very day that I hated and wished it should never come. What is to become of me then!

Kusumavati: But pardon me, Gracious Lady I am at a loss to guess the reason of hurrying up the hymeneal feast quite before the arrival of the groom's party from Hastinapura.

Rukmini: What a simpleton you are! It is because Duryodhana proposes to celebrate the nuptials this time in his own capital, lest some other catastrophe befalls him as before. We are to pack off day after to-morrow only. Let it be. You go and see the Princess without further delay, as she won't tolerate anybody to touch her except yourself.

Kusumavati: Here I go; but then who will attend to His Holiness for the time being?

Rukmini: Well, I shall do it myself. You can go.

Kusumavati: Your pleasure, My Lady.

Exit Kusumavati with a bow.

Rukmini: (*Approaches Arjuna with her hands joined in supplication*) Your obedient, Holiness! Order your servant, please.

Arjuna: (*Strikes the rosary against the ground*) Curse be to your services and the unhappy tongue! I shall consider it the best service, if you clear away immediately, understand?

Rukmini: Goodness! This appears to be some pretender, and not a real ascetic in blood, indeed! Why otherwise should he be exasperated to hear the news of my good sister's marriage, — the happiest fixture ever known to the world since long?

Arjuna: (*Beats his chest vehemently*) For every reason on earth ! I am a lion, not born to see a fox taking away my own prize ! You are blessed, that I have not pulled out your tongue, and cut it into pieces for such a mean bragging. Narayana !

Rukmini: (*Aside*) O Lo. he must be the same and none else ! (*Aloud*) You fiend, you Arjuna ! Do you suppose, that you can dupe me like others ? You may have played your part successfully, so far ; but at last you have betrayed yourself to me thus.

Arjuna: (*Aside*) My God ! I have erred and erred grossly too ; a prey to my own anguish, I have committed the worst blunder, which cannot be rectified now. Help me O God, help me !

Rukmini: You cheat ! confess the truth or I shall report your wicked design to the Liege Lord, and will expose you to the world.

Arjuna: (*Gets up*) O kind sister, I am humble before your wily cunning. You have brought this destitute soul to your gracious feet. I seek your protection, I implore you. Pray - !

(*Falls prostrate at her feet.*)

Rukmini: (*Coaxes him with a smile*) Oh, what's this ? Get up, get up brother Arjuna.

Arjuna: (*Remains in the same position*) No, I won't, I won't till you promise to save me from this calumny !

Rukmini: Take my word for that, brother. Be bold. I wonder, how you think even of my being the cause of your shame; it was a mere joke, that I exasperated you, you see!

Arjuna gets up and takes his seat.

Rukmini: And now Arjuna, I ask you, whether you have ventured thus, merely to secure our sister's hand? And how do you expect it, now that you have entered into the life of an ascetic as such, Arjuna?

Arjuna: Pardon me ! I confess, that my Sanyasa is as false as my present guise. But will you for a while oblige me and stop calling me by my real name? It will be a matter for a scandal, if anybody overhears it. Won't it spoil my prospects?

Rukmini: Very well, brother Arjuna; but tell me, what have you settled to do after this?

Arjuna: My muddled brain practically does not know what to do. I was absolutely disappointed when I first learnt, that she was to be married to Duryodhana; I took this vow and went straight to a cavern in the Raivatakas. To my surprise, Balarama brought me here. But I am lost to think of any source to be free from this confinement and elope with my Love.

Rukmini: Well then do as I say, Arjuna.

Arjuna: I am prepared to obey you and do anything; but for God's sake, don't call me ever and anon as Arjuna.

Rukmini: Well, well! Lend me your ear so that I shall safely disclose the way of your freedom.

Arjuna: Well!

Gives ear to her. She whispers.

Rukmini: But, Aye, take good care; I am going.

Arjuna: Prithvi's sister, are you sure that Krishna knows all this or at least will approve of it, if your design were carried out to the end?

Rukmini: No questionings hereafter. You will know it by the by.

Arjuna: I shall never forget your obligations, good sister!

Rukmini: Lo, I totally forgot; I must honour you to suit your guise.

(Bows down.

Arjuna: *(With a smile)* Narayana!

Exit Rukmini.

Arjuna: What an amazing prudence and wit! She gave a bluff about the immediate rites and rituals, hymeneal feast and this and that - only to exploit my pretensions. O, the divine

resourcefulness ! Its all well; but why my beloved fails to turn up here, bluff as it is.

Then enter maid Saranganayana.

Saranganayana: (*Joins her hands*) Please Your Holiness, My Lady the Princess regrets to send me and express Milady's inability to attend to His Holiness to-day, and further, pleads for pardon at the feet of His Holiness, as Milady has been detained there by the Queen-Mother, for an urgent work.

Arjuna: Narayana, Narayana !

(*Sits silent.*)

Behind the curtain: ' Why, is there no-body ? '

Saranganayana: Some reverential visitor, Your Holiness ! I shall see.

(*Goes and returns : With joined hands*)

Lord Satyaki, the Commander-in-Chief, to see His Holiness; I await His Holiness's order to show in the Lordship.

Arjuna: (*With a willing nod*) Narayana, Narayana !

Exit Saranganayana.

Re-enter her with Satyaki.

Saranganayana: Here's His Holiness.

*Satyaki falls prostrate before him out of
reverence.*

*Arjuna: (Raises his hand) Narayana,
Narayana !*

Satyaki: (Rises up and joins his hands again)
His Majesty the King pays respects and directs me to inform Your Holiness, that His Majesty intends to go to the Holy Sea for ablutions, with all citizens, under the auspices of the Maha-Parvati, early morning to-morrow, in state procession; and that His Majesty will be returning from there at even-tide, after a commemoration banquet to be held in the Royal forest. If His Holiness desires to go, arrangements will be made for the company of the Princess, or she may be allowed to stay here, if otherwise.

Arjuna: Marry ! What have we got to do here, when all of you are going out so religiously ? Ourselves will be mightily pleased to go with you all, if we be left aloof from the contact of the mob.

Satyaki: I myself shall look to that pleasure of His Holiness and arrange accordingly. None except the Princess and her chosen attendants will be with His Holiness.

Arjuna: Very well, then.

Satyaki: I crave my leave from His Holiness.

(Falls prostrate to salute.

Arjuna: Narayana, Narayana !

Exit Satyaki.

Arjuna: (*To the attendant*) Well, you also will go to arrange for our noon ablutions. We will just follow you.

Sarangnayana: As His Holiness pleases.

Exit Sarangnayana.

Arjuna: (*Rises up with joy*) There is no doubt, that the whispered spells of Rukmini will come out true now. And early morning tomorrow shall I break these 'Dandas' and throw away these loathsome clothes vermillion. My bad days have passed away. I am gaining strength now and will easily put down the whole army of the Yadavas as easily as I should a slight fly.

Exit Arjuna.

End of Act IV.

ACT V:

Seaside precincts of the Raivataka : Arjuna in ascetic's garb, absorbed in meditation. Subhadra and her maid Kusumavati attending in reverence, at some distance.

Arjuna: (Wakes from his meditation) Oh Eternal Existence, Life and Bliss! Almighty, Oh Narayana!

Subhadra followed by her attendant advances to make obeisance.

Arjuna: Narayana! Blessed be your desires with fulfilment! Subhadra, to ascetics like us, this free disporting in the woodland is far more congenial than to be pent up in cities. Lo, I had been feeling, as if, cooped up in that boudoir of yours, charming though it was. But oh! To-day like a parrot just set free from its cage, I am feeling all buoyant and merry, all the livelong day.

Subhadra: (With a soft smile) But I fear, with me as a still attendant pest, your joy is not as unalloyed as you would wish it to be.

Arjuna: Tut tut ! Ascetics like us never feel annoyed in mirthful company ; but for sooth, I have no patience with these uncouth maids of yours.

Subhadra: Please, Your Holiness, I do see it ; but, under Your Holiness's gracious pardon, I am quite helpless. Unused as I am to hardy toil, I have to be guilty of the sacrilege of making these poor creatures wait upon Your Holiness. By way of slight expiation, never the less, come what may, I take upon myself to do all service to-day, that it may afford some pleasure to Your Holiness.

(To the maid

Good Kusumavati, have a full holiday to-day and be one of these merry crowds, so gay and festive.

Kusumavati: My Lady, nothing save your gracious presence, doth please my eye, but bidding your pleasure, however, I depart and shall keep myself near about. I beseech to be summoned, if there be need.

Exit maid.

Arjuna: So, Subhadra, are you bent upon giving me the delight of solitude and your company ? All right then, I too shall exact service, worthy of thee.

Subhadra: (With slight anger) Your Holiness is an ascetic and no language can be but meet and becoming to the Holy Order.

Arjuna: Very sorry! Please don't take it amiss, however. Unversed as we are in the style and manner of the world, such casual slips do sometimes occur.

Subhadra: Oh no! Rather I must crave Your Holiness's pardon. for allowing thus, for the nonce, to be swayed away by passion, at some ill-understood word of spiritual dignitaries, to hear whom I scarcely get any chance.

Arjuna: So clever you are, Subhadra! Your company will make one feel an year to be but a day and, a day a veritable moment!

Subhadra: What else can be a better consumation? I too, earnestly beseech, that Your Holiness may so appoint me, that I also may not feel a moment dull as a lifelong day and a day irksome as a dragging year.

Arjuna: (*Aside*) I must now trim my sail to another wind; altogether. (*Aloud*) Look, oh Subhadra, this bracing hour of the morn fills my heart and steeps my fancy in pleasant revery -

Gone, are all the planets gone,

Like sages at the Kali's morn;

And the Dark's gone, like passion

From the saintly mind foresworn;

Sky's saintly mind's delight!

Like wealth

Of the idler, brilliant night

Suffers death!

Subhadra: Why, everything looks so charming,
bathed in the golden glories of the morn.

And wood-land breeze doth coolly blow,
Burdened with the pollen's scent.
From all the trees the birds wake; O,
Sweetness in the air, they've sent!
The peacock dances, its hen doth show;
And charmed cobra nods attent.

Arjuna: Verily, Subhadra, if we were to
mount up the top of the Raivataka, ranged along
the edge of the sea, and survey the prospect,
it will give us a still exquisite pleasure.

Subhadra: Most gladly, provided Your
Holiness deigns to show me the cave, hallowed by
Your Holiness once.

Arjuna: Ye, with all my heart, I will. The
cavern is quite near by this place.

Subhadra: Oh, so grateful! We move then.

Arjuna: But do thou wrap first in the
shawl here, for the high breeze there will be
too much for you.

(*Points to the shawl with his finger.*

Subhadra: Too heavy is this shawl, wherefore
I choose a lighter one from amongst the
clothes, my maids brought for me; and shall
wear this, only in extreme needs.

(*Returns from within, with another shawl
concealed under her garment.*

Arjuna: Come on then.

Both act ascending a mountain.

Oh Subhadra, how fatigued you look even by the few paces, we have trod, though the sun has not mounted yet very high. Wiping the dewy sweat from this beautiful face over and over again, your delicate hand seems to have been done up; this bosom seems to heave high with fatigue, and these sweet cheeks appear to be reddened more at the same time. Rest, therefore, awhile here.

Subhadra: How indeed, I simply serve a convenient excuse! Your Holiness, too, is not less fatigued than myself.

Arjuna: As you please then. Let us both rest here awhile and then set on towards the cave.

Both sit down.

Subhadra: (As if looking down from above) Your Holiness, from here is visible, down at at the foot, of the mountain, the concourse of the entire men and women of Dwaraka assembled in the tiny coppice, lining the Sea-beach. It makes me fancy thus-

This mountain, as a trader,
Cargo brings by sea;
In bazaar turns coppice,
Of variegated toys.

My fancy in this manner
Impelleth me, to see
In dress and decoration nice,
Concourse so huge as this.

Arjuna: (With a significant smile) A very happy and apt, indeed, is your fancy and it exactly corresponds with mine, for I too imagine myself -

One doll from all the cargo
Picking in my hand,
I have a mind to ask him,
" Speak, O, speak its price ! "
In Such a novel fashion.
My fancy doth command,
As I behold this concourse
In all its fineries.

Subhadra (A bit abashed: Aside) Oh, the tables are turned against me ! My own fingers thrust back into my own eyes. *(Aloud)* Pardon, Your Holiness, I wonder to hear Your Holiness uttering, for the first time, words befitting carnal men !

Arjuna: No, no ! It's not that way ; just as the sameness of the menu makes the meals irksome so does the conversation unsauced by

variety of sentiments, make the life dull, and look again, no talk of whatsoever a strain can taint or affect us in the least.

Subhadra: (*Aside*) Long since an ardent curiosity has been impelling me to know the past of His Holiness; but could get no suitable opportunity. It's a fine time now and I shall make bold, therefore, to question His Holiness about it.

Arjuna: Oh, what makes you silent Subhadra! Perhaps, I fancy, a new poetical conceit to outwit me.

Subhadra: I have been, rather deeply revolving in my mind to ask Your Holiness about something, for doing which I crave Your Holiness must not, please, be angry with me.

Arjuna: Oh, why Subhadra! You may freely ask me anything, and not in the least shall I be offended.

Subhadra: Your Holiness, if all things conspire to fashion themselves, smoothly, there is, I fancy, much happiness even in this mundane world of ours. A beautiful wife, unfluctuating wealth and a meritorious son do make the home sweet and happy, and one's happiness is doubly heightened to sweeten and enlighten the life, if one gets a grand-son; one then will be apt to discard the bliss of heavens even. Why then, I humbly crave to know, did Your Holiness chose to renounce the world, in the very prime of life?

Arjuna: Subhadra, it's altogether wrong to conceive of happiness in the worldly life. For worldly happiness is but a delusion, and people nothing but deceive themselves, - like a foolish child that sucks its own thumb besmeared with its own saliva, and delights as if it is sucking its mother's breast.

Subhadra: It is so, no doubt; but so great an aversion for the world is not born with the man; it doth need some cause to engender it. Will Your Holiness tenderly deign to confide the reason, that brought on His Holiness to face the crisis.

Arjuna: Oh pity ! I am overwhelmed with sudden emotion. Still, I shall try to unbosom it to you. I had a beautiful cousin, and we fell in love with each other. Her brothers did appreciate it and encouraged us till this time; but, alas, they chose to break their promise after all.

Subhadra: (*Aside*) Oh heavens ! How surprising is this? Brothers in the world are all alike, meseems, - all unparrelled wickedness and cruelty, - immensely mercenary and look only wealth in their brothers-in-law, and don't care to see whether he possesses a bit of virtue. (*Aloud*) But did your cousin keep up her plighted troth or she also turned the sails with her brothers ?

Arjuna: Oh ! Forget that. She is, for sooth, of inestimable worth and its very rare and hard, indeed, to find the like of her. She left food and dried her blood with the heat

of separation from me. Her brothers called her insane, shut her in a dungeon and tyrannized her variously. And with all these oppressions, she did not change, but did abide by her determined love for me—love so pure and chaste !

Subhadra: (*Aside*) Brava, noble girl, Brava ! Thou art a veritable kin of mine, ordained to cruel fate. Methought, that I alone was created to be miserable, but now there seemst to be another soul, created to endure a similar doom. (*Aloud*) Well then, what happened next ?

Arjuna: What else but this : The more she persisted in her resolve to wed me, the more obdurate and confirmed became her brothers in their intent to deny her her wish. Dismayed thus, I betook myself to asceticism and set out on a pilgrimage, instantaneously.

Subhadra: Oh, most revered Holiness, how amazingly parallel are our tales ! I simply feel that we are mates in suffering, save the only difference, that Your Holiness made an end by sundering yourself from the world, while myself am still smouldering in the consuming heat of this anguish and agony.

Arjuna: Well Subhadra, pray, enlighten me more about the import of your words, " How amazingly parallell - ".

Subhadra: Just imagine me in the plight of your cousin, Holiness, and nothing more needs be said.

Arjuna: Dear me! But who is the blessed soul, for whom you are pining, like my cousin?

Subhadra: Hark unto me, Holiness. It's he, whose name is Vijaya - the son of King Pandu and Kunti, the daughter of Yadu; the brother of Dharma and Bhima; and to him - to that world-renowned archer - did I dedicate myself, and won't now be faithless to him, even if my throat were to be butchered. And if I crave anything in the world now, it is Your Holiness's blessing, that my noble resolve ever remains unshaken.

Arjuna: All His blessings on you, and I pray, He will never leave your perseverance unrewarded. (*Aside*) My joy! There is no doubt that remains uncleared, now. I must presently acquaint her with the truth and elope with her right now; yet I will not do so. I shall wait a little more and amuse myself with whatever fun I shall meet with.

Subhadra: Pray Holiness, haven't we taken sufficient rest to move towards the cave?

Arjuna: Oh Subhadra, the cave is just before you. This is the very cave, where I have spent some of my happy days as an ascetic.

Subhadra: Oh Joy! This cave is carved to have every possible comfort and convenience of a sweet home!

Arjuna: But none of them existed before my arrival here. Some of my imperial votaries have done them afterwards.

Subhadra: Oh, what a fine pandal! It but suggests to me of some nuptials that must have been celebrated here and very recently too!

Arjuna: Or perhaps preparad for some such impending celebration, will be a sweeter and a more plausible expectation, will it not?

Subhadra: Please, Your Holiness, I am eager to go in and explore this cave. May I do so? There's no fear of wild beasts crouching inside, I hope!

Arjuna: Not at all! You can safely do your will.

Subhadra: But all the same I pray, that His Holiness will please be here in this pandal; until I return.

Arjuna: As you please, Subhadra.

(Sits down.)

Subhadra enters the cave.

Arjuna: It's a splendid moment to reveal myself! Shall I then tell her my true story and bear her away to my sweet home? But nay! Unfortunately, I am unarmed and hence defenceless to ward off the attack of the Yadavas, if involved. What shall I do now?

*Re-enter Subhadra with a bundle, a bow
and an arrow in her hands.*

Subhadra: Look here, Your Holiness, I

found all these things in the remotest nook of the cave. Please see, what they are.

(*Puts before him the bundle.*

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Bravo, bravo ! I am lucky to get these arms now. It's my own costume and these are my own arms, which I had discarded, some time back, to be an ascetic and had left them in a dark corner of this very cave. I had cleanly forgotten them, but my beloved, at last, brings them to light. Oh sweetness ! I shall not be scared away now, aught may happen. (*Aloud*) Methinks, dear Subhadra, some heroic Prince may have left them here.

Subhadra: (*Unties the bundle, inspects all clothings and ornaments.*). Your Holiness, I am sure, that I have seen these beautiful adornings and this handsome costume, too, some time; but cannot say definitely where and when.

Arjuna: May perhaps be the belongings of Arjuna, your lover ! It is rumoured, that he has been wandering in disguise.

Subhadra: (*Aside*) From His Holiness's past and affable manners, a curious hope impells me to conclude, that His Holiness himself is my own Lord Arjuna. (*Aloud*) Your Holiness, a secret craving is swelling in my heart, since long. I beseech His Holiness, therefore, that His Holiness should fulfil kindly that sweet longing of mine.

Arjuna: Very well, Subhadra, speak it, for

I shall liberate you from that suspense, by my troth, to-day.

Subhadra: Your Holiness, I have been worshipping you, like a devoted votareess worshipping God Himself; and in that sublime spirit, I do cherish now to put this costume on you and gladden my eye to see Your Holiness in that divine form, just in the manner of devotees, who more than often put various garbs on their idols and are happy to see Him, in that characteristic.

Arjuna: (*Aside with delight*) Oh good luck! You are so fond to enrapture me to-day as you were to put me to shame and distress some days ago.

Subhadra: (*Picks up a dhoti from the bundle*) Please, wear this first.

Arjuna wears it.

Subhadra: And now, do I lay these ornaments and this costume on your graceful person.

(*Does accordingly; gazes at him: turns her face abashed.*)

(*Aside*) O Jo! He resembles just the Lord of my soul, in every respect! Goodness, is he not the same—he, on whom my enamoured eyes were fixed? Is this not the very personation of my heart's idol? Oh Subhadra, don't be silly to deceive yourself by mere semblance! Many a face may be exactly similar to one another.

Arjuna: Oh, why does Subhadra turn her beaming face and stand still? Has she finished up?

Subhadra: (*Faces him*) Yes, almost; but for a missing shawl, which is a necessity.

Arjuna: Well then, what matters it? My Chati will do for the present.

Subhadra: (*Recollects : Aside*) O my own shawl alone will reveal him - my lover - perfectly. (*Aloud*) No, never. I have got my own shawl, which His Holiness will, please, wear. Here it is.

(*Hands over the shawl.*

Arjuna: (*Releases the fold of the shawl and delights*) Oh, it absolutely stuns me. There is no doubt, it is the same as my cousin presented to me, complicating my name in its laborious broidery, she had herself wrought. (*Jokingly*) But how comes it now to be the possession of this girl? I wonder!

Subhadra: (*Hangs down her face in delightful abashment : Aside*) Sure, he's none else but My Lord himself! (*Aloud*) Perhaps this poor girl may be His Holiness's cousin herself and may thus possess it.

Arjuna: (*Approaches her and puts his hand around her shoulder*) Oh, I don't understand what you mean, Subhadra!

Subhadra: (*Removes his hand*) Are you still pleased to keep me in this torturing suspense?

Arjuna: Well dear, I am glad to return your courtesy, by presenting to you something else. Come, have this jewelled necklace.

(Puts it around her neck.

Subhadra: (Stares with surprise at it) Dear me, it's the same as one, that my Love had presented to me with great affection. (Jokingly) And how the devil now happens to be with His Holiness ?

(Looks down and smiles.

Arjuna: O, thou Elixir of my life, My Love! Here, by the Earth, the Water, the Light, the Wind and the Sky - by these five elemental forces, (Takes her by her right hand) this manly and valiant Partha - your lover, my dear me, weds you this day in the name of Religion and Life! Leave off all doubts and embrace me, my love.

(Embraces her.

Subhadra: (Embraces him and rests her head on his bosom.) Too much have I tortured you and have pained you, in vain. It's I, that forced you to take recourse to this garb of ascetics and have thus humiliated the very gallantry to the censure of the world. And with all this you have forgiven me to make me happy.

Arjuna: Oh, forget it dear! Whatever is, is for the good - for our absolute good. The very struggle enhances our meeting, as that of Rati and Madana. Emerging from the furnace

of separation, both of us are eternally united, just like two pieces of red-hot iron, that get merged into each other by the property of heat. And the career, moreover, of our love has been rendered so romantic, that it will become an endearing memory of eternal Poesy and the sublime scope of Drama.

Subhadra: Very ! My Lord, its so astonishing and stunning, in sooth, particularly this interchange of your shawl with me, and my necklace, with you !

Arjuna: (*Aside*) Now I can release to my Love facts about it.

(*Whispers the episode in her ears.*

Subhadra: O, I see ! That's how I feel to have seen you in that jungle. And although I could not completely recognize you then, your face all dripping with blood, and myself all engrossed in my own grief, still I thought, it were you. But can you, My Lord, account for the demon, that bore me thither, or for my safe return to my dormitory ? I am at a loss to make it out.

Then enter Rakshasa.

Demon: (*Joins hands*) My Lord, I am the author of that mystery and have worked out the disappearance of the Princess, in conformity with the plans of Lord Krishna, - to save her from falling in the hands of Duryodhna, just at the nick of time of her marriage, - and

her safe return afterwards, leaving for you the purse, that contained the letter together with the necklace taken off from the Princess' neck.

Subhadra: Good Gracious ! What an amount of censure have I heaped on benevolent Krishna who had done such a munificent turn to me !

Demon: Here your child Ghatotkacha, my dear Uncle and Aunt, bows to you both.

(Bows down.

Arjuna: O dear, Ghatotkacha - the son of Bhima, O come child, embrace me. (*Embraces him.*) I am so sorry to have made you bleed that time.

Demon: Forget it, Dear Uncle, I was joyed at that, on the contrary.

Arjuna: My dear me, thy father will be overjoyed at this turn thou hast done to me.

Subhadra: (*Embraces Arjuna again*) O My Lord, you should better have taken recourse to some other means than this asceticism. Why did you so subject yourself to the ridicule of the world ?

Arjuna: Why, I carried out your suggestion only, dear !

Subhadra: O Graciousness ! My suggestion - did I suggest you to do so ?

Arjuna: Sure ! And I can evidence my oral accusation by your own script. Here you are.

This epistle found in the self-same purse, left by Ghatotkacha with your necklace in it. This is your hand, isn't it?

(*Hands over the letter.*

Subhadra: (*Reads the letter*): Very! But I never wrote it, although it resembles my hand.

Enter suddenly Krishna.

Krishna: Good Sister, don't be puzzled. I wanted Arjuna to be your leige-lord, and to contrive well that plan, I myself forged this letter; pardon me.

Subhadra: (*Hides herself bashfully behind Arjuna.*)

Krishna: (*Faces Arjuna*) Glory to my friend, that has won his wife, at last, after an amount of struggle!

Arjuna: Pardon me! I trust, my dear Krishna will pardon me. Not knowing such a bracing secret, I have reproved him - my benefactor, my Krishna! I apologise.

Arjuna and Krishna meet and embrace.

Subhadra: (*With tears, bows to Krishna*) I have no words to thank my noblest Krishna for his obligations; they are so immense!

Krishna: (*Caresses and wipes out her tears.*) Forget it, dear. I did my duty and verily in my own cause. Please, don't mention it.

Subhadra: But another danger now confronts you, dear brother. How will you reconcile our elder brother?

Krishna: Let not your benignity be disturbed by that thought. It's enough, if you simply follow me. Now Ghatotkacha, take all these implements of asceticism to the foot of this mountain and protect this couple, without forgetting my instructions, in times of need.

Demon: Your obedient!

Exit Ghatotkacha with Chati and Dandas.

Krishna: Well, Partha, return to your original place with your consort. I am going.

Exit Krishna.

Arjuna: Sweet one, let us retrace our steps to declare our union openly before Balarama.

Subhadra: I am ready.

(Both walk a little.

Oh, my heart is sinking fast at the very idea of his terrible wrath.

Arjuna: Go to! What the hell I care for that, while I am armed with my blessed bow. I shall thus defy Yama—the Death himself!

Exeunt both.

A big row behind the curtain “O help, double up, help!” *Then enter Balarama, brandishing his mace, listening to the uproar.*

Balarama: O Hell, why are they uproaring: what's the cause? Hey, who's there?

Then enter a Rakshasa with joined hands

Lambakurcha: The worst tidings of its sort, Your Majesty, and still it cannot be kept a secret.

Balarama: (*Alarmed*) Speak, speak first! What befalls our bad lot?

Lambakurcha: The Princess, - Subhadra, Your Majesty, has been borne away by that hypocrite - the hermit.

Balarama: (*Rushes at him in wrath.*) And where were you and your squadron - all dead? Were the armed guards dozing? What had happened to you, you shameless effeminate unuch? Wait, I shall just blow you up, at the mouth of the gun, for such a grave offence as this. Hey, who is there, my chariot, my chariot, soon! I shall turn down the whole world or pull down the heaven; but shall not leave that wicked scoundrel - that hermit - unfound. Where will he go, on earth?

Then enter Krishna.

Krishna: Hail, all hail, brother! Well, what's the fun? Why are you so enraged from tip to toe?

Balarama: Don't you know it still? Wonder! That wretch of a hermit has borne away Subhadra.

Krishna: This was a foregone conclusion, that I had drawn. But who told you this?

Balarama: (*Faces Krishna with rage.*) Ah, I see! It's all out and out your trick, Krishna. I know it thoroughly well, that you are always wont to foil every one of my plans. Let go. I am damnably tired! Let this world and this kingdom go to the hell! I shall hide my face behind that asceticism and renounce all this bother of life. Hey, who's there? Go and prepare for my initiation to the Sanyasa.

Then enter a servant with all the requirements for Sanyasa.

Servant: Here, Your Majesty, are these requisites.

Balarama: Damned be your wickedness, Krishna! You have keenly kept all this equipment already ready, Eh, to send me to the forest!

Krishna: Peace, my revered brother! Why should you pass such a stricture, without knowing the fact, that the servant has not yet told?

Balarama: (*With contempt*) Hear him yourself.

Krishna: (*To the servant*) Hey, what do you want to say, be plain?

Servant: Your obedient! Your Majesty will know, that this garb of an ascetic was found by Lord Satyaki at the foot of the mountain, while His Lordship was in search of the Princess. His Lordship ordered me ahead with

this, and will follow me just now with the detailed knowledge of this mishap.

Then enter Satyaki.

Satyaki: Glory to their Lordships! I bear a delightful tidings.

Balarama: (*Consoled*) Speak first, speak, O Child Satyaki.

Satyaki: A quite young and heroic Prince has saved the Princess, who may now be descending down the slopes of this mountain together with the rescued. He has smartly punished the ascetic, wrested from him his habits and thrown them down. I have already managed to send them for the inspection of Your Majesty.

Balarama: How glad am I! Who may he be, Satyaki?

Satyaki: I am sorry! I cannot define him exactly, as I have viewed him from a long distance; but I feel certain, that he must be King Duryodhana.

Balarama: Whosoever he may be; I vouchsafe forthwith to offer my sister to him.

Krishna: Wait, wait my brother; think well before you leap into this gulf of promise again, as you cannot deny your word to King Duryodhana. He must be depending on your pledge.

Balarama: Go you. If this hero is Duryodhana himself, it's well and good; if he is

not, that will not matter much for me, because Duryodhana is my disciple and I can reconcile him any way. Hurry up, Satyaki and bring that princely youth soon to greet my eager eyes. Ardency is surging high within me; it overflows my heart.

Satyaki: Your obedient, Your Majesty.

Exit and re-enter Satyaki with Arjuna and Subhadra.

This way, this way Your Highness. Here wait Their Majesties with greetings.

Balarama: (*Steps forward a little*) Bravo, Oh Crest-jewel of Bravery, bravo! Here are we glad to return your obligations by offering the hand of our dearest sister to you. (*Recognises Arjuna*) Oh lost, utterly lost alas! An unconscious promise is not in the least a binding! (*with vengeance*) You outcast, vile, Arjuna! Do you hope to get Subhadra by such a treachery? Suffer then my mace, instead.

(*Rushes to hit Arjuna with his mace.*)

Enter Sage Garga intervening and holding Balarama's flourishing hand.

Garga: Stop, Balarama stop! Desist from breaking your promise. Refrain from this salacious assault, that will turn your sister a widow. Are you going to murder Arjuna?

Balarama: (*Throws off the mace*) Then take it and hit my head withal.

Garga: Peace, peace O Rama; a seer of seers will never malign himself by such insanity ! Don't you believe me - me, that forever strives for the good of yourself and your dear ones ? Will I ever allow the tables turn on you ?

Balarama: O my worthy Preceptor, drunk of your words, as though of nectar, my passion gives way to peace !

Garga: Give me, therefore, a patient hearing. Arjuna is the only and the fittest match for Subhadra, just as she herself is to him. I pray God, that He by His favours keep the bonds of cordiality, that tie your family with that of Pandu's, in tact as they are from times immemorial !

Balarama: (*Pacified*) Myself, for that, shall never violate your pious wish.

Garga: Then forget the passion and unite Arjuna and Subhadra yourself, in my presence: and love them henceforth.

Balarama: I am always at your sublime command, Preceptor !

Garga: Make a bow, O Partha, to Balarama.

Arjuna: O my bow to the excelling nobility !

Balarama: (*Holds Subhadra's hand. To Arjuna*) Dear Child, here I am offering the hand of my sister to you -

Arjuna: And here I have accepted it with a great regard -

Krishna: Lead a happy life; and may your home be blessed with noble sons !

Then enter Rukmini.

Rukmini: My congratulations to you, sister, on marrying at last a Sanyasin ! Don't you still like to grace me with your loving word ?

Subhadra: (*Blushes*) You have gained ample ground to criticise me, is it not, dear sister ?

Garga: All your desires have been fulfilled, Arjuna. Ask for any other boon, if you desire.

Arjuna: All my motives have been crowned with success - all by the virtue and favour of Your Holiness - and nothing remains with me to beg. Still if the Divinity is generous to grant anything more, this is the last reward I beg of Your Grace -

Kind, impartial be all kings;

For Self and Nation's rise

Efforts let the subjects make;

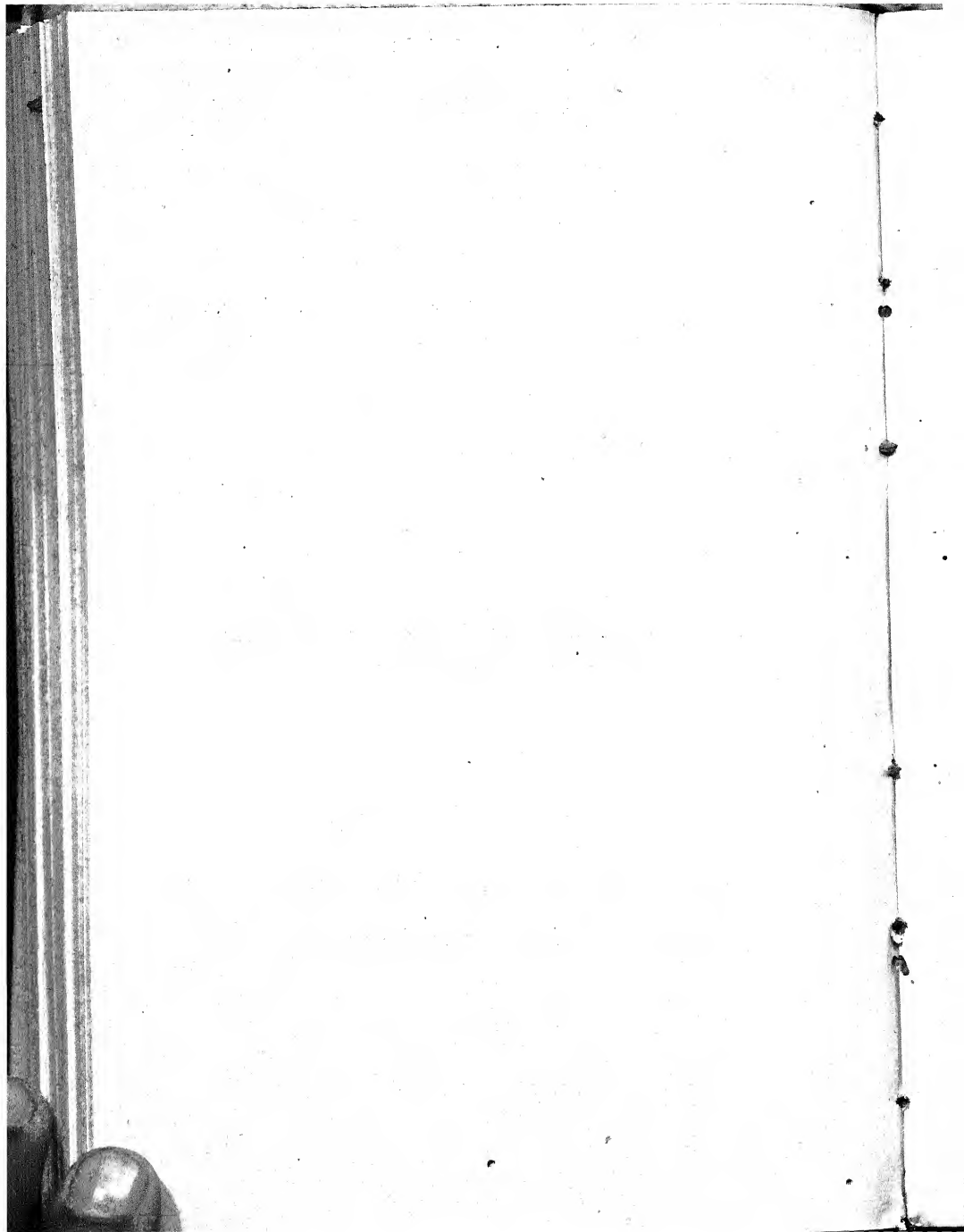
Poets to good poetry take;

Shiva, thro' people, patronise !

Garga: (*Raises his hands to bless*) So will it be !

Exeunt all.

End of Act V.



NOTES.

Abbreviations:

A. S. D. = The Practical Sanskrit - English Dictionary by V. S. Apte, M. A. .

M. Dk. = Maharashtra Jnanakosha, edited by Dr. S. V. Ketkar, M. A., Ph. D.

The figure at the beginning of the notes refers to the page of the text.

ACT I.

1. *Saubhadra*. Pertaining to (an episode in the life of) Subhadra - sister of Lord Krishna.

Nandi. Particularly the benedictory verse or verses, recited as a sort of prologue at the beginning of a drama, wherein the gods are praised. (cf. A. S. D.).

Sutradhara. 'the thread-holder', a stage-manager, the principal actor who arranges the

cast of characters and instructs them, and takes a prominent part in the Prastavana or prelude. (cf. A. S. D.)

Ganesha. Ganesha means the chief of followers and servants of God Shiva. He is the son of Shiva and Parvati.

He is the presiding deity of learning and is also famous for destroying the dangers of His devotees. It has, therefore, become a convention to praise and invoke Him, at the beginning of any great or small missions. When the first lessons are to be taught to a Hindu child, the auspicious name of God Ganesha is written and repeated first.

The great epic Mahabharata is supposed to have been written by this God as dictated by Sage Vyasa.

Ganesha is an ancient God appearing even before the Vedic period. He has been explicitly referred to in Maitrayani Samhita (2. 6. 1.), and described as "Elephant-headed, having only one tusk." There is a religious sect in India viz. Ganapatya who suppose, that He is the Greatest Self (Paramatman), and that He is the Creator of the universe. He alone is eternal imperishable, immortal, devoid of all properties and shapes.

Lord Ganesha is worshipped daily in every Hindu house-hold as the most auspicious of all gods.

Kalidasa. The learned Poet and author of celebrated works Kumara-Sambhavam, Raghu-

vamsham, Megha-Dutam and (dramas) Shakuntalam, Vikramorvashiyam Malavikagnimitram. He lived between the fourth and fifth century A. D. (cf. M. Dk., Vol. 10).

Shiva. Name of the third god of the sacred Hindu Trinity, who is entrusted with the work of destruction, as Brahma and Vishnu are with the creation and preservation, (cf. A. S. D.). He is supposed to be the Lord of Kailasa. Parvati is his wife, and Ganesha and Kartikeya are his sons. Kashi (Benares), the holiest of all places in India, is dedicated to Shiva.

Kailasa. Name of a peak of the Himalayas, and residence of Shiva, Parvati and Kubera. It is 21, 830 ft. above the mean Sea-level.

Vishva. The whole universe - heaven, earth, lower and other fifteen regions.

Kunda. *Jasminum arborescens* A kind of Jasmine (white and delicate).

2. Chieftain of the world's highest mountains. The Himalayas.

His daughter's resolve. Parvati's resolve.

(The earliest residence of Parvati along with Rudra Shiva, who was considered the lord of the white mountains originally, would have been the Himalayas. This fact alone could have given rise to various mythologies of the type, for instance Sati in her next birth would become the daughter of Menaka and Himalaya; and then should be married to Shiva, after performing austere penance, after which Kartikeya would be

born to them and would kill the demon. Tarakasura etc.

Enemy of Mura. Krishna i. e. Vishnu (vide note Vishnu, P. 15). Mura was the name of a demon slain by Vishnu.

Indra. The God of fermament, is the Jupiter Pluvius of the Indian Aryans. He is spoken of in the Vedas as being born and as having a father and mother. He is said to be the son of Ekashtaka, and in Rigveda he is said to have sprung from the mouth of Purusha. He is of ruddy or golden colour, and can assume any form at will. He rides in a bright golden chariot drawn by two tawny horses. His most famous weapon is the thunderbolt, which he uses with deadly effect against demons, darkness, draught and inclement weather, variously called Ahi, Vritra, Sambara, Namuchi and etc..... He sends down fertilising showers of rain to the great delight of his worshippers. Soma is his most favourite juice....He richly rewards his adorers. particularly those who bring him libations of Soma. He is supplicated for all sorts of temporal blessings....

Such is the Vedic conception but in Mythology he falls to the second rank, as the son of Kashyapa and Aditi. He is inferior to the Triad (though regarded as the elder brother of Vishnu) but the chief of all other gods. As in the Vedas so in the later Mythology, he is the regent of the atmosphere and of the East Quarter and his world is called Svarga (cf. A. S. D.).

Indra and Krishna were at cross with each other for some reason or the other (cf. Lifter of the Mount, p. 8; Satyabhama, Act III, p. 74)

Chandra. Name of god Soma, who lords the Oceans. He is described as the great friend of Indra. The most important of all the Vedic sacrifices is the Soma-Yaga, named after him. He is particularly invoked at all other sacrifices.

In the Brahmana literature, Chandra is called by the name Soma. In the Atharva Veda, Soma is identified with Chandra - the Moon. Their identity is granted also in Rigveda (10. 85).

He is also termed as Indu - Moon, (cf. M. Dk., Vol. II.).

Nati. The Chief actress (regarded as the wife of the Sutradhara.)

3. *Madana*. Cupid.

Rati. The goddess of Love, wife of Kama, Madana or Cupid.

Dwaraka. Capital of Anarta, an ancient Indian country.

It was a part of Gujarath.

There lived and reigned Lord Krishna and Balarama with the whole of the Yadava clan. This city was first on the main land. But to prevent the constant and continuous molestation from Jarasandha and the Kalayavanas, Krishna got it situated in the sea by Vishva-Karma the Divine Architect.

It is considered as one of the holiest places in India; and thousands of pilgrims visit the temple of Shri Dwarakanathaji (Lord Krishna) on the banks of the Gomati.

Dwaraka is at present a town and port, in the Taluka Ukhamandala in the province of Amreli, in Baroda State. The merchandise is exported to and imported from Bombay, Surat, Karachi and Zanzibar (cf. M. Dk., Vol. XV.).

4. *Balavanta*. Balavanta Panduranga alias Annasaheb Kirloskar - the poet-dramatist, the author of the present play.

Sangita Saubhadra. Musical play Saubhadra. (There are about hundred songs in the original but the selected few are rendered in verses, hymns and songs in this translation.)

5. *Daxina*. A religious gift given by the performer of rites, in order to attain the desired fruit of the performance.

The word may be traced right up from Rigveda. In the Taittiriya-Samhita the word is used in its explicit significance. Sacrifices began with the solemn and outsetting declaration that, ' So many cows will be given by way of the Daxina. '

Therein are prescribed different kinds of gifts such as cows, ornaments, gold, clothing and etc. depending upon the nature of importance of the sacrifice to be undertaken. So also the days and time of offering the Daxina are prescribed, e. g. Daxina is offered on the day

of extraction or preparation of the Soma Juice, at the time of mid-day-libation in the Soma-yaga; but it is also offered at the close of the observances or rites ordinarily. There are instances of donors, like King Shibi, who offered even parts of their bodies as Daxina in certain sacrifices, (cf. M. Dk., Vol. XV.).

Vaishakha. Name of the second lunar month of the Hindu calender, (corresponding to April - May)

Duryodhana. The eldest of 101 sons of Dhritarashtra and Gandhari. Dhritarashtra was blind and hence Duryodhana is termed ' the son of the blind. ' He was invincible in duels. He was the deadliest enemy of the Pandavas, particularly of Bhima, and tried his utmost to encompass all of them in utter destruction. But every time the Pandavas were forewarned of the dangers or luckily they saved themselves; at last they took the offensive and fought with the Kauravas - Duryodhana and his brothers; and Bhima killed Duryodhana on the last day of the Bharati Yuddha, by smashing his thigh with the mace (cf. A. S. D.).

Dhananjaya. Another appellation of Arjuna, for he used to bring wealth to the Pandavas, whenever required by conquering the wealthy kings. (Literally it means ' one who conquers wealth ')

6 *Arjuna*. Name of the third son of Pritha or Kunti by King Pandu. He is the most

illustrious descendent of King Shantanu of the Lunar Race. Arjuna was born as the spirit of Indra himself, on account of a boon of Sage Durvasas to Kunti.

Arjuna, the great Hindu Hero, learnt the lore of missiles from Acharya Drona. After skilfully saving himself and his brothers from being burnt up in a house built of the lac and other highly combustible materials by Duryodhana, while they were in exile, he went, with his brothers in the guise of a Brahmana to Panchalapura; and won Draupadi at her Svayamvara, by correctly hitting the image of a fish - hung above a horizontally revolving wheel, while looking to its reflection in the caldron of boiling oil beneath. The Princess was shared by five brothers, as a result of the unwitting order of their mother, who did not know the nature of Arjuna's new aquisition, and who, therefore, asked them to divide it - taking it to be some spoil - equally amongst them. This was a grave contingency, as Kunti's words could not go amiss nor could they be dishonoured. That time Sage Narada dictated, ' For one year Draupadi should be the wife of one of the brothers in succession; one who will see her thus living should go in exile for a year. ' (cf. Skanda - Purana, Vaishnava Khanda, part II, 29. 14 - 15).

Arjuna for an involuntary transgression had to go into the temporary exile, and during that time learnt the science of arms from Parashurama, and visited as many holy places

as possible. Faring thus he had been in Dwaraka, where he married Subhadra. Prior to this he had married Ulupi and Chitrangada. After finishing his pilgrimage, he returned to Indraprastha. Here he helped God Agni to devour the Khandava-vana, a forest sacred to Indra, and got in return of his services a gift of a celestial chariot and a celebrated bow Gandiva from Agni (cf. Mahabharata, Adiparva, Adhyaya 38.). He then helped his eldest brother Dharma in performing the Rajasuya-Yajna, by conquering the Northern countries for wealth required for the purpose.

- The Pandavas were now at the height of their glory, making their enemies - the Kauravas - more jealous than ever. Duryodhana invited Dharma to play at dice - the only vice of the latter. At the play, Dharma was loosing everything he staked - himself, his brothers and even Draupadi. In pursuance of the conditions of the play, the Pandavas were to go in the exile for a period of twelve years; and were to remain in *cognito* for the thirteenth year from the play. They abided strictly by the said conditions, and entered the kingdom of King Virata, in the guise of poor brahmanas.

Arjuna guised himself as Brihannada - a neuter-actor and a dancer, (Mahabharata Virata - parva, Adhyaya. XI.).

After this period of thirteen years, the Pandavas demanded back their kingdom, but the Kauravas refused. Hence the Great Bharati-Yuddha was contemplated. Arjuna secured the

assistance of Lord Krishna, secured some more celestial weapons also from other gods, and played a distinguished and heroic part in the war that ensued. Lord Krishna related to him Shri Gita, on his hesitation to bend his bow against his revered preceptors and kinsmen, at the outset. Arjuna, thus divinely encouraged, vanquished in this battle warriors like Bhishma, Drona and Karna. The Kauravas were routed completely and killed. And after having performed their funerals in accordance with the prescribed rites, Dharma accepted the crown reluctantly. But he was well-advised by Bhishma himself to do so, after duly performing the Ashva-medha Sacrifice, by way of expiation of sins, which Dharma had imagined to have committed, in waging a war against his own cousins. The sacrificial horse was let loose.

Arjuna was guarding the sacrificial horse and those who obstructed it as a sign of non-acceptance of their sovereignty, were vanquished by him, with an exception of his own son Babhruvahana - born of Chitrangada, who mortally wounded him. Arjuna was subsequently restored to life by Ulupi to resume his journey. Within a year Arjuna returned to the capital a victor. And the contemplated sacrifice was successfully performed.

Arjuna was the bravest of all, highminded, generous, upright, handsome and the most prominent figure in the Pandavas. He has got

several appellations such as Partha, Vijaya, Madhyama (middle) - Pandava.

Arjuna was so called because he was 'white' or 'pure' in his actions. The dictionary-meaning of the word: 'Arjuna' (adj.) - white, clear, bright, of the colour of the day (cf. A. S. D.).

Son of the Blind. Duryodhana.

Krishna. Name of the 8th son of Vasudeva and Devaki - the eighth, incarnation of God Vishnu (vide Vishnu. P. 15)

Haladhara. Another appellation of Balarama. ('Hala' means a plough-share). Balarama favoured it as the most effective weapon and always borne it, and performed wonderful feats with it.

Rahu. Name of a demon, son of Viprachiti and Simhika. When the nectar was churned out of the ocean, it was being served to gods. Rahu disguised himself and attempted to drink it along with them. But he was detected by the Sun and the Moon, who informed Vishnu of the fraud. Vishnu, thereupon, severed his head from the body, But as Rahu had tasted, till then, a little quantity of the nectar, his head became immortal, and is supposed to wreak vengeance on the Sun and the Moon, at the time of conjunction or opposition (cf. Nitishataka of Bhartrihari, 34.).

In astronomy, Rahu is regarded as Ketu to be one of the nine planets, or only as the ascending node of the Moon.

When the physical phenomenon of the Lunar Eclipse was not scientifically explained, the devout people took, that Rahu devours the Moon.

Rahu's influence on man, according to astrology, is surprisingly revolutionary; and it is believed, that man comes under his influence at the age of 42.

7 *Dhritarashtra*. Name of the eldest son of King *Vichitravirya*. As an eldest son he was entitled to the throne; but being blind from birth, he renounced the sovereignty in favour of *Pandu*. The latter retired to the forest, and *Dhritarashtra* had to resume the rule. He made *Duryodhana* - his eldest son - the virtual ruler. When *Duryodhana* was killed by *Bhima*, the old king thirsted for revenge and expressed his desire to embrace *Yudhishtira* and *Bhima*. *Krishna* readily discovered his object, and convinced that *Bhima* was his prey, he caused an iron image of *Bhima* to be made; and when the blind King rushed forward to embrace *Bhima*, *Krishna* substituted the iron image, which the revengeful old man pressed with so much force that it was crushed to pieces; *Bhima* thus escaped death; and the discomfited old monarch, with his wife, repaired to the Himalayas, and died there after some years (cf. A. S. D.).

Pandavas. Five sons of King *Pandu*.

Lord of Revati. *Balarama*. *Revati* was the name of his wife.

Balarama. Name of the elder brother of Krishna, and the king of Dwaraka. He was the seventh son of Vasudeva and Devaki, but transferred to the womb of Rohini to save him from falling a prey to the cruelty of Kamsa. He and his brother Krishna were brought up by Nanda in Gokula. (cf. 'Milkman etc.' on page 8). When quite young, he killed the powerful demons Dhenuka and Pralambha, and performed like his brother many feats of surprising strength. As Krishna was the friend and admirer of Pandavas, so Balarama was of Kauravas, as was seen in his desire to offer Subhadra to Duryodhana rather than to Arjuna; yet he declined to take any part in the Great Bharati War.

He is supposed to be the incarnation of Serpent Shesha. He was just and generous.

Son of Bharata. An actor or a stage player. 'Son of Bharata' is used by Arjuna to condemn the Sutradhara, because the former incensed the latter by saying, that Subhadra was being offered to Duryodhana.

Bharata was an ancient sage, who is supposed to have been the founder of the Science of Dramaturgy.

8. *Dharma or Dharma Raja.* Another name of Yudhishtira the eldest son of King Pandu and Kunti. He was born as an incarnation of Yama-Dharma, by the power of the celestial Mantras. He was gentle and sinless, extremely kind and a great friend of those born under the sun. He had no enemies and was called Ajata-Shatru. He

avoided bad words to such an extent that he used to call Duryodhana as 'Suyodhana'—the deadliest enemy of the Pandavas. He was famous for speaking truth. (vide. Arjuna, p. 6).

Vina. Indian lute.

Hari. Another appellation of Vishnu

Narada. Name of a celebrated Devarshi (deified saint or divine sage). He is represented as the messenger of gods to men and *vice-versa*, and as being very fond of promoting discords amongst gods and men. He is said to have been the inventor of the lute or *Vina*. He is also the author of a code of laws, which goes by his name (cf. A. S. D.).

Jaya! The exclamation 'Jaya' (Hail! Glory!) is uttered and written by bards etc. at the very beginning of their songs, particularly in praise of Gods or kings or heroes or other great personalities. Devotees begin their Kirtanas and Bhajanas (musical sermons) conventionally with this happy exclamation.

Radhadhara-madhu-milinda. It's a compound of four words—'Radha' (name of a cowherdess in Gokula), 'Adhara' (a lip), 'Madhu' (honey) and 'Milinda' (a bee); together it means 'Bee for the honey, on the lips of Radha'—Lord Krishna.

Radha was the name of a celebrated Gopi, a cowherdess and wife of Ramana—a cowherd residing in Gokula.

She was loved by Krishna; but their love-affair should not be supposed to be obscene.

in any way. It was not so. Their's was a Divine Love and had nothing of mortal passion or carnality in it.

Their divine amours have been sung with devotion by hundreds of saints of the highest order, and by millions of other people. A poem 'Gita-Govinda' by a famous Indian poet Jayadeva has immortalised this subject. A mystic saint Shrida Vithala has introduced the element of Radha in his famous work Radha-Vilasa, in Kannada.

In 'Devi-Bhagavata' (Skandha 9, Adhyaya 1.) Radha is said to be Shakti-faculty of God • Vishnu Himself.

She is taken as an incarnation of Laxmi by the Vaishnavas; and there are special sects devoted to her such as 'Radha-Vallabha Pantha.

Besides even the Smartas also adore Radha whose symbol is plant Tulasi (Holy Basil). The marriage of 'Radha' and 'Vishnu' is symbolically performed by every Hindu house - holder, under the name Radha-Damodar or Tulasi - Vivaha every year in pomp and ceremony on the twelfth of the bright half of Kartika, at the • end of Chaturmasya. This day is supposed to be the first auspicious day after the said period, for celebration of nuptials among the Hindu community. The episode of Radha may also be regarded and considered as a reminiscence of the early doctrine of Shaktism.

Regarding the sentiment about Radha-Krishna among the Hindoos, the following

note is enlightening and therefore interesting, (cf. Coomarswamy, 'Transformation of Nature in Art', pp. 44-45) —

'In India conditions of human love, from the first meeting of eyes to the ultimate self-oblivion, have seemed spiritually significant and there has been a free and direct use of sexual imagery in religious symbolism. On the one hand physical union has seemed to present a self-evident image of spiritual unity; on the other the operative forces, as in modern scientific method, are conceived as male or female, positive or negative. It was thus natural enough, that later Vaishnava mysticism, speaking always of devotion (Bhakti) should do so in the same terms; the true and timeless relation of the human soul to God could now be only expressed in impassioned epithalamia, celebrating the nuptials of Radha and Krishna — the earthly bride and the heavenly bride-groom. So there came into being songs and dances in which at one and the same time sensuality has religious significance and, spiritually physical substance.

'If in painting and poetry the daily life of peasants seemed to reflect conditions ever present in the pastoral heaven of the Divine Cowherd this is not a sentiment or romantic symbolism but born of conviction that "all the men and women of the world are his living forms" (Kabira), that reality is here and now tangibly and visibly accessible. Here the scent of the earth is never present. "If he has no eyes, nor nose, nor mouth, how could he have eaten

curd? Can we abandon our love of Krishna to worship a figure painted on a wall?" (Suradasa). Realities of experience, and neither theories of design nor inspiration none knows whence, are the sources of this art; and those who cannot at least in fancy (Vasana) experience the same emotions and sense their natural operation cannot expect to be able to understand the art by any other and more analytical process.

Govinda. Name of Lord Krishna: Literally it means 'a cow-keeper; a chief herdsman.'

Rama. Name of Laxmi wife of God Vishnu, and the Goddess of wealth.

Lifter of the Mount. Govardhan-dhari, Krishna,

The 'Mount' referred to here is Govardhana a celebrated hill in Vrindavana the country about Mathura.

Indra once poured a torrential shower of rain over Gokula, the fond residence of Lord Krishna while he was only a boy. Thereupon the Lord should have advised the residents to pacify Indra by a worship. He instead asked his favourite Gopas and Gopis to worship this Mount. This enraged Indra, who with a vengeance tried to inundate Gokula with the storm-water. The residents were in a precarious condition. To save them from the ruin Lord Krishna lifted high the hill, extracting it from the ground with his fifth finger. He held up the hill for seven days continuously and thus sheltered the whole population underneath it.

Indra was thus vanquished. And forgetting totally his vanity, he came to knees before the Lord seeking friendship.

For this valorous deed the Lord received the appellation Govardhana-dhari - Lifter of the Mount.

Sport in the Milkman's hut. Sports of boy-Krishna while he was in Gokul at the Nanda's.

By 'Milkman' is meant Nanda, the chief of cow-herds and of Gokul. He was the husband of Yashoda - the foster-mother of Lord Krishna. Krishna, immediately after his birth, was given to the care of Nanda and Yashoda, by his father for fear of Kamsa, the king of Mathura and the maternal uncle of Krishna. Kamsa was told that the eighth child of Vasudeva and Devaki would kill him - the child being the eighth incarnation of God Vishnu. Kamsa apprehensive of the Maya of Vishnu thought it advisable to kill all offsprings of his sister immediately after their birth. He imprisoned his sister and her husband in a well-guarded dungeon, and no sooner learnt of her delivery than killed the offspring by dashing it on a big slab of stone. Just to save the Lord - the eighth child, Vasudeva endangered his life and went to Nanda crossing the surging river Jamuna at the dead of night, and entrusted the divine child to him, and returned again to the dungeon. Nanda remained true to his friend Vasudeva, and brought up Krishna with an uncommon love and fondness.

Nanda also fostered Balarama. Krishna's sports are further referred to—

(a) *Killing the Giant.* Krishna killed many giants, including a female giant Putana, whom Kamsa had sent of and on to kill Krishna and harass Nanda.

(b) *Expelling the Serpent.* In a deep pool of water in the river Jamuna, there lived a huge black cobra with five hoods viz. Kalia. It was of the family of the sons of Kadru. Prior to the occupation of the pool in the Jamuna, it lived in the island of Ramanaka. But for fear of the divine eagle Garuda it changed its residence. Due to Kaliya's inhabitation, the waters of the pool had become deadly poisonous so much so that if a bird flew over it, it died instantaneously. The sight, therefore, was strictly prohibited for visits. Unconscious of the prohibition, one day the cow-herds went there with their cattle and drank them and themselves with poisonous water. All poor souls died. Exasperated at this bad news, Lord Krishna hastened there, climbed up a tall tree by the side of the pool and dived deep into it. The Lord found the serpent out. A furious tussle ensued, in which the reptile was so crushed and exhausted, that it practically gasped for life. Just then the consorts of Kaliya prayed Krishna, for their lord's life. Their prayer was granted, as Kaliya also had surrendered. Lord Krishna ordered them to go back to

Ramanaka. The orders were obeyed. Having thus expelled the Serpent, the Lord revived his Gopas and their cattle to life, cleared the pool off the poison and gladdened the world.

Such miraculous feats of Lord Krishna, performed while he was a mere boy, have become 'the world's talk and trust!'

9. *Satchidananda Parameshvara*. Existence or entity, Knowledge and Blissful Joy, an epithet of the Supreme Spirit Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva. i. e. Parameshvara. This well known concatenation is formed of three words: Sat - Existence, Truth or Reality; Chit - Knowledge; Ananda - Pure Joy. '...Reality subsists there where the intelligible and sensible meet in the common unity of being and cannot be thought of as existing in itself 'outside and apart from, but rather as knowledge or vision, that is only in act, — or metaphysically by an identification of Being (Sat) with intelligence (Chit)' (cf. A. K. Coomaraswami, 'Transformation of Nature in Art.' p. 11.).

The poet, through Sage Narada, is relating his 'pure æsthetic experience' that this creation is the image of Himself, and 'overall sensible things hangs a motionless haze of unity.' He, further says, that this creation is his mere 'Sport' (Cf. '*Lokavat tu lila-kaivalyam*' *Brahmasutra-bhashya*, II. 32) where the Creator and the Creation are the same, '... their nature' proceeding in itself, in clear conception and

delight. This sharing of God's vision of Himself in His Work ... is what we mean by "Beauty" as distinct, from loveliness or liking, which have their drawbacks in their opposites.'

Self-consciousness of the dramatist himself is evident in the form of this speech of Sage Narada. It conforms to the essence of the whole of the Upanishadic Literature, that man has four selves : (a) the Sensational - which feels, (b) the Energetic - which acts, (c) the Mental - which thinks, and (d) the Transcendental - which enjoys intuition. The realisation of the fourth self is what is called absolute knowledge i. e. Brahman. ' But the first three selves are the forms of the Absolute higher self (Atman-God) because He expresses Himself through them - His functions ' (Cf. M. R. Ananda, 'Hindu View of Art', page 66.). ' The essence of Atman and Brahman (the subjective and objective) when actually realised is called Ananda. The world is full of Him qualitatively not quantitatively. ' (*ibid.* pages, 68, 70).

Kundala. An ear-ring.

- *Middle Pandava.* Arjuna (he was the third of the five brothers).

Your Holiness's dictates. (vide note on Arjuna, p. 6.)

- 10. *Indraprastha.* This famous city which has been immortalised by the wonderfully thrilling stories about the Pandavas and the Kauravas, - the city that the Hindus love to

remember and adore was about two miles away to the south of Delhi. There are no remains of this grand capital of the Pandavas. On that sight can now be seen some dilapidated remnants of a muslim fortress and a few old mosques.

The Pandavas were required to build this city, just to honour their paternal uncle's—Dhritarashtra's word, who foresaw that there will surely be a quarrel between them and his sons over the partition of the old kingdom. He, therefore, sent a word to his nephews, that they should have a great forest Indravana for themselves to set up their own kingdom there instead of coming to Hastinapura.

Dharma the eldest of the Pandavas agreed to his proposal, and built up this city, clearing the whole of the forest. This excellent city was situated on the western bank of the Jamuna, and was built up with the help of the divine architect Vishva-karma.

The sight itself has been considered by the Hindus, as one of the holiest places in India. At present there is a Tirtha Nigamodbodha on the bank of the Jamuna.

When one goes to see the sight of Indraprastha, one is required to pass through the ' Red Gate ' in Delhi. Exactly in front of this gate one sees an old fortress. This is said to be the sight of ancient Indraprastha. Inside this fortress, there are two fine buildings ' Killa Kona Mashid ' and ' Sher-Mandal. ' The Mashid is considered as an architectural

achievement. The tower from which Arjuna is said to have guarded his fortress, by the dint of his celebrated bow Gandiva, has now given place to this mosque. The hall where Lord Krishna and Pandavas met in conference over critical political issues is now seen replaced by the Sher-Mandal or Palace of Sher Shah. The people there relate that the Pandavas performed their Rajasuya sacrifice where there is now the court-yard of the said palace.

Queen Draupadi. The great heroine of the epic Mahabharata, and the idol of chastity remembered every morning with devotion by the women of Aryavarta (India), even to this day.

She was the daughter Krishna of King Drupada. She is also known as Panchali, Yajnaseni & etc. She arose from a sacrificial flame, when Drupada performed a sacrifice. It was Shachi herself, the wife of Indra that was reborn. Arjuna won her at her Svayamvara (Cf. Arjuna, p. 6.)

She was looked upon by Lord Krishna as his own sister, on account of her piety and loving nature.

As faithful to her husbands—the Pandavas, she bore with uncommon calmness the insults inflicted on her by the Kauravas and others. Her power of endurance was miraculous, and she stood even the test of Sage Durvasas, who visited the Pandavas, while they were in exile, with his 60,000 pupils, at the dead of

the night, and demanded them to quench their thirst and hunger ere long. Pandavas had nothing with them. But her devotion to Lord Krishna saved the credit of the Pandavas, at that critical juncture.

Her patience was tried, and she could not bear her husbands' tame way to put up with the insults inflicted on her by their enemies. It was on her remonstrance that the Pandavas contemplated war with the Kauravas.

She was chaste, forgiving, virtuous but self-respectful.

She followed the Pandavas in their miseries and also accompanied them, when they went to the Himalayas to seek emancipation, but died on the way. (cf. M. Dk., Vol. 15.)

12. *Shiva deadly venom.* A deadliest poison viz. Halahala was churned out of the Ocean by the gods and the demons. Being of a very verulent type it began to burn up everything, and would have burnt the whole universe, had not great god Shiva swallowed it immediately. Shiva did so. Its only effect on the god was that His throat became deep blue.

Indira. Name of Laxmi, wife of Vishnu.

13. *Bhima.* The second of the five Pandava brothers, son of Kunti. She obtained him by propitiating Vayu (Wind). He was endowed with the power of ten-thousand elephants. Among victims to his might were several demons such as Baka and Hidimba, and

kings Jarasandha, Kichaka etc. In the Great Bharati War, he killed Duryodhana and Dusshasana to fulfil his vow of breaking the thigh of the former, and drinking the blood of the latter for grossly insulting Draupadi in the open Darabara. His name has become proverbial for one who possesses immense strength and courage. His most effective weapon was his mace. He played a very important part in the war and finished it by killing Duryodhana, on the last day of the battle.

14. *Tridandin*. A Sanyasin who carries three long staves tied together so as to form one in his right hand.

Raivataka. Name of a mountain near Dwaraka.

15. *Vamana*. Name of Vishnu in His fifth incarnation, born of Sage Marichi and Aditi, as a dwarf to humble Bali - grand-son of Pralhada noted for his unhesitating liberality.

Vamana had assumed the garb of a Brahmacharin, approached Bali and asked him to give him as a gift as much space as his three steps might cover. Bali was pleased to promise it. On Bali's declaration of the grant, Vamana assumed a mighty form and covered all the worlds in two steps and raised the third. But finding there no space left to put it, asked Bali, obviously to humble him, as to where he should put it. Bali gallantly offered

his head, on which Vamana pressed his step and down he pushed Bali to the lowest region - Patala. Vamana thus once more restored the Universe to the rule of Indra. Bali's greatness has forced Lord Vishnu to guard the doors of Patala personally. Bali is immortal.

Vishnu. (Vishnu, Krishna, Hari and Narayana) Krishna as the theistic god traces his history to Rigveda, - the Deity Vishnu embodying the power of the Sun. During the transition to the Upanishadic period Vishnu had become the most important of Gods in popular fancy, as signifying the spirit of the Blessed Cosmic Spirit and sacrificing itself for the world. He was sometimes worshipped as the Purusha or Purushottama. Later he became God Hari or Narayana, the Omni-potent principle or essence of life, the Supreme Self, as the Individual Self. And the idea of Bhakti (Devotion) as the extatic worship of the Divine Being, through ritual and meditation became attached to him. Amongst the various incarnations of Vishnu, Krishna was at one time declared as the most important by the Aryans now anxiously ennobling each new member of their enlarged pantheon in turn. In the Earliest portion of the Mahabharata, Krishna is simply a demi-god; but towards the end of the Epic, he has risen to be the supreme and has almost become the hero of the poem in the person Yadava, Vasudeva; and several elaborate cults such as the Vaishnavas, Bhagavatas and the Pancharatras have grown.

up around him, (cf. 'Hindu View of Art' by Dr. Ananda).

Kaustubha. Name of a celebrated gem, obtained with thirteen other jewels at the churning of the Ocean, and worn always by Vishnu on his chest.

Pralhada. Name of the eldest of the four sons of Hiranyakashipu. According to Padmapurana, Pralhada was a Brahmana in his previous birth, and when born as the son of the demon he still continued his ardent devotion of Vishnu. His father of course did not like, that his son should be such a devout worshipper of his mortal enemies, the gods; and with the object of getting rid of him, he subjected him to a variety of cruelties. But Pralhada by the favour of Vishnu was quite unscathed, and began to preach even with greater earnestness that Vishnu filled all space, and was Omni-present, Omni-potent, Omni-scient. Hiranyakashipu, in a fit of exasperation asked him, 'if Vishnu was present in the pillar of this hall?' And on getting 'Yes' from his son, kicked the pillar to convince him of the absurdity of his faith. But Vishnu came out of the pillar half man and half lion, and tore Hiranyakashipu to pieces, (cf. A. S. D.).

Killer of the furious Demon. Vishnu, the killer of furious Hiranyakashipu. Hiranyakashipu had obtained a boon from God Brahma, that he will never meet with death within or without his house, not at day or at night, neither at the hands of a human being nor an

animal, neither by any weapon nor by missile, neither with animate, nor inanimate object. This is why God Vishnu was required to assume the form of half lion and half man to kill him, (cf. Pralhada).

Tulasi. Ocimum Sanctum (the holy Basil), held in veneration by the Hindus, especially by worshippers of Vishnu. (Cf. 'Radha...', p. 8.)

17. *Ketaki. Pandanus Odoratissimus*. Name of the flower of the Ketaki-plant (screw pine).

22. *Pandu*. Name of the father of the Pandavas. He was the son of Sage Vyasa and Ambalika. By Kunti he had three sons Dharma, Bhima and Arjuna; by Madri two - Nakula and Sahadeva. He was the descendent of the illustrious Kurus of the Lunar Race.

23. *Yadavas*. Name of the clan descended from Yadu. They resided in the country near Mathura. (Yadu was the name of an ancient king, the eldest son of Yayati and Devayani.)

Gandiva. Name of the celebrated bow of Arjuna, who obtained it from god Agni. It was obtained after his marriage with Subhadra.

24. *Partha*. Arjuna.

25. *Ornament of the Lunar Race*. Arjuna, *Vijaya*. Arjuna.

Sanyasin. (Complete renunciation of the worldly possessions and attachments is *Sanyasa*). One who adopts the state of *Sanyasa* is a *Sanyasin*.

Sanyasa is the fourth stage a man is to enter, the three previous to that being Brahmacharya, Garhasthya and Vanaprastha. This stage had become imperative for classification of life led by the people, who had devoted exclusively to the attainment of knowledge about Self. It was formulated after the period of Shvetashvatara Upanishad and is mentioned in the Jabala.

Originally Sanyasin meant a person renouncing mundane pleasures and passions. One could hold this attitude even in any of the two stages Brahmacharya and Garhasthya. But after a long time of experience it was styled and defined as the last or the fourth stage, one should enter. The significance of the term also changed. Formerly it was taken as the very life's attitude of a person endowed with the knowledge of Self; but subsequently it came to signify the very means to acquire that knowledge. (cf. M. Dk., Vol. 20.)

ACT II.

- 29. Shri. 'Vedic conception of beauty is implied in the word Shri, - brilliance, splendour and adornment of the work or of wealth, success; welfare of the work, - skill. This was the ideal, the poet (or the philosopher) had in his mind, when he compared his creation to the skilfully designed chariot of a clever carpenter, or to the beautifully woven cloth of an accomplished weaver or to the bride.

adorned for the lover.' (cf. Ananda, 'Hindu View of Art', p. 61.)

When Shri precedes the name of any person, it is the mark of greatness or dignity, e. g., ' Shri Garga '.

This honorific prefix is also used while mentioning celebrated works generally of a sacred character, e. g., Shri Gita, Shri Bhagavata, Shri Ramayana.

It is also used as an auspicious sign at the commencement of letters, manuscripts and etc.

Garga. From the ancient history of India, we know that Garga was an established family.

There is an ancient treatise namely Garga - Samhita as referred to by the famous astrologer Varahamihira (born in 490 A. D.) of the court of King Vikramaditya. So there is possibly a ground to suppose, that the author of the original treatise must be the same Sage Garga, as referred to in this drama, who is the preceptor of Lord Krishna and the Yadava Clan. This statement gains ground because Balarama and Lord Krishna consider him as a great authority, and the final word, (cf. M. Dk., Vol. 12).

Guru. Religious teacher, spiritual preceptor. (Technically a Guru is one who performs the purificatory ceremony over a boy and instructs him in the Vedas.)

The following note refers to the preceptors of the Brahmana and Kshatriya classes. -

As Mantras were said to be self-evident, and not constructed by human beings, the institution of preceptors or Acharyas was not in vogue in the Vedic period. But later on, as it became essential to prepare a compendium of the various sacrificial Mantras and procedures, a class as such of Acharyas or preceptors came into existence and in course of time became established; some of them came to be considered as authorities on particular sacrifices, and some of the performances are exclusively assigned to them. Famous amongst them are Angiras, Garga, Atri, Kusurbindu, Brihaspati, Nachiketa, Vasishtha and etc.

When sacrifices were in vogue, there occurred more often than not contingencies of serious debates over the correct pronunciation of the Mantras, their interpretation and their employment in ceremonials. Hence it became imperative on the part of the Acharyas to prepare a syllabus so as to enable their pupils to know the full propriety of following the particular systems. Thus with the teaching of the three Vedas, there rose up the curricula to teach other six auxiliaries of the Vedas—Shiksha - the science of proper articulation and the pronunciation; Chandas - the science of prosody; Vyakarana - grammar; Nirukta - etymological explanation of the Vedic words; Jyotish - astronomy; and Kalpa - rituals or ceremonials.

There was a regular lineage of these Acharyas;

and later on distinguished personalities from this lineage had to undertake technical training too.

In the period of the Aranyakas, people had become inert towards the sacrificial institutions, but enthusiastic towards philosophy. The teachers of the time, therefore, moulded their syllabus in tune with the popular notions, and taught philosophy, after which the people were hankering, and a new lineage came into being. Pioneers and the prominent amongst these evolutionaries are Janaka, Yajnavalkya and etc. But this cannot be an altogether a new phase. Its germs can be found in the Brahmana-period too, as is evident from the lineages detailed in the Shatapatha Brahmana, and Jaiminiyopanishad Brahmana. In these, first of all, appear the signs that the teachers did not restrict their instructions only to the training in the Vedic Rituals or only to the settlement of dubious points in regard to the Vedic Texts, but also dealt with the problems such as nature of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit, and cultivated the system of the Shat-Darshanas i. e. Six principal systems of Hindu Philosophy such as Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa and Vedanta. The names of Yajnavalkya and Jaimini appear in both Purva-mimamsa and Uttara-Mimamsa.

In the great epic Mahabharata, there are copious references to teaching institutions conducted in those days by Gurus or Spiritual Preceptors. The Pupil used to stay at his

Preceptor's home for years together, serve and help him in his domestic affairs, study, and return home after the Preceptor qualified him to enter into the world at large. The pupil offered him the Guru-Daxina and then went home. It is also pointed out in the same epic, that sages like Durvasas had thousands of pupils; still there is no reference to the definite curricula they adopted. It may therefore, be safely inferred, that it did not differ materially from one, adopted in ancient times.

The Aryan Civilisation in India underwent many vicissitudes later on, and was practically routed by the Muslim and other invaders. As a result of these catastrophes, the Indian Lore became subsidiary to Spiritual Knowledge. Every other kind of knowledge was considered from the view point of final atonement. Scientist-teachers also advocated the same principle and came forward as guides to the final beatitude. These Gurus boldly began to profess, that knowledge was not the essential qualification, to the attainment of Salvation; individuals also left their quest for knowledge because they were lured away by the rosy idea of Moksha. This eventually led to the rise of quack spiritualists or pseudo-Gurus, who tried to impress on the minds of the people, that even the most learned and extremely pious men cannot reach the final goal without the guidance of a Guru, no matter whether that Guru was incompetent, vicious or unhealthy. This is the real cause of the downfall of

the once excellent civilisation. But this darkness is now fast decaying, as there is apparent that sublime tendency among the people of India, towards the quest for real knowledge and very soon the Bharatiya Religion will once again be revived and glorified.

To summarise: the word Guru is found in the Vedic Literature right up from the Sutras e. g. Paraskara and Baudhayana Grihyasutra, wherein is stated, that a student must commence and suspend the Vedic studies while staying at the Guru's residence, and must not return home even after the completion of the study unless the Guru permits him to do so. With such rigours and rigidities hundreds and thousands of students simultaneously studied at one Guru-Kula, i. e., an academy..... The Narayanopanishad lays down rules for the pupil's conduct with his Guru or Preceptor. As regards the qualification of a Guru; Manu and Yajnavalkya deal with the subject at length in their Smritis.

It is essential here to illustrate as to how the Preceptor was keen in bringing up his disciples, and to furnish them with the highest Spiritual Knowledge. It will also help the reader to understand the real spirit of the full-throated praise of the preceptor sung by Krishna, (Act II).

(a) In the Cchandogyopanishad the story of Satyakama Jabala is narrated to prove, that Devotion and Penance are the essential parts of the worship of Brahman.

Satyakama, with the consent of his mother Jabala, went to Gautama Haridrumat with the desire to learn at his feet. Gautama asked him about his descent. Truthfully, Satyakama told him, that he did not know it. His truthfulness itself was taken by Gautama as a sufficient indication of his being a Brahmana, and as an enough ground to initiate him to Brahmanism by performing his Upanayana Samskara (the Thread-Ceremony). Satyakama, was asked to bring some sacrificial wood for the ceremony, which Gautama performed himself. Gautama then asked him to take from his cow-house 400 lean and weak cows for grazing them in the pastuers. While doing so, Satyakama vowed to return home only when the cattle would multiply and become one thousand in number. Thus determined, he stayed with the cattle in the forest for a year. His dream was achieved, and he returned to the hermitage of Gautama.

Thereafter, a bull possessed by the spirit of Vayu (wind), God Agni, and Sun in the form of a Swan furnished him one by one with the three-fourth part of the knowledge about Brahman. The remainder was taught to him by an acquatile bird Madgu, which was Prana (breath) Himself.

Equipped with the full knowledge, he returned to the hermitage again, when the Preceptor with the wel-come smile said, "O child, you appear like the knower of Brahman himself. Please tell me who instructed you." Satyakama replied, "Gods and others, who

were not human beings, instructed me. But now I desire to hear about the same knowledge, and Sire, thou alone art capable of relating it to me. Although I have acquired this knowledge from other teachers, let me say, that that lore alone, which has been imparted by Acharya (Guru) himself leads to extreme and real happiness. At this reply, Gautama declared that "There remains nothing to be imparted to you as Lore, because you have learnt everything,"

(b) There is another story in the Cchandogyopanishad (4. X. I). -

Satyakama asked his students to return home as they had completed their course of studies. Amongst them one Upakosala Kamalayana alone declined to go away. He had thoroughly served Agni and his Guru. Knowing this well, the wife of Satyakama said to him, that Upakosala should be further instructed in the Knowledge about Brahman, so that the disciple would not remain ignorant, and no blot would come on Satyakama for leaving him so. But Satyakama did not pay attention to her and left home to set on travel. Upakosala felt disappointed and agrieved and emotionally left off taking food. The wife of the preceptor, asked him reasons for his doing so, when he replied, "A man has got in his mind various and diverging desires. Those are afflicting me; that's why I have left off taking food."

But in consideration of his rigorous penance and unflinching services, the three Agnis themselves manifested before him and told,

'Prana, Happiness and Akasha (sky) are Brahman.' The Agnis explained to him the theory and acquainted him with their real nature, and said to him, "Child, we have told you our lores and the lore of Self so far. The further knowledge and direction will you receive from your Acharya."

After a long time his preceptor returned home. And on seeing Upakosala he said, 'Child, your face appears deemed like those that know Brahman well. Who gave you that knowledge?' Upakosala narrated to him what had happened in his absence. Satyakama said "O dear Child, they have told you only about the various regions of the world, but nothing about Brahman in its entirety. I will now tell you. Just as water does not touch the lotus leaf, so does a sinful act never taint the one who knows Brahman. The Person (Purusha) that appears in these eyes is Self. He is immortal and fearless. Himself is Brahman. This Purusha is called 'Sanyadvama' because all beautiful things converge ultimately into this Purusha. He is 'Vamani' because he makes the fruit of merit accessible to all meritorious beings. He is 'Bhamani' because he manifests himself in all the regions of the world. And one who knows this becomes manifest in the whole of the universe. After the death, he may or may not anybody perform funeral rites for him - reaches God Archis (flame, fire), thence goes to the Deity proud of the Day (Divasabhimani), thence to the Shukla-paksha (Bright half

of the month), thence to Uttarayana and lastly to Samvatsara. Further, he travels to Aditya (Sun), then to Chandra (Moon) then to Vidyut (Lightning) automatically. There some supernatural being from the region of Brahma meets and escorts him upto Brahman. That is the very way of Gods, the very way of Brahman. Those who go this way, never fall again into the sinister whirls of Mortality. (M. Dk., Voll. 8, 12.)

30. *Chaturmasya*. Religious observances during the period of four months from the eleventh of the bright half of the month of Ashadha (June-July) to the twelfth of the bright half of Kartika, (October-November). The conventional idea behind the importance of this particular period is, that Lord Vishnu goes to sleep on the former date and wakes up on the latter; if religion and fasts are strictly observed during this period, one becomes free from all sins, and attains Vaikuntha the abode of Lord Vishnu Himself, i. e. attains salvation. Restrictions in diet during this period are prescribed in the Skanda-Purana, Nagara Khanda, Adhyaya VI. They are -

Avoid vegetables in the month of Shravana, curds in Bhadrapada, milk in Ashvina, and cereals in Kartika.

Regarding the merits of the observances during this period, it has been said, that -

(a) One who performs a sacrifice with Tila (sesamum seeds) and Akshat (whole rice washed with water) becomes free from sickness or disease, and becomes healthy and sound. (b)

One who does not take salt in this period, is liked by God Vishnu. (c) Those who feed Brahmanas, recite Vedas, keep continuously awake by dancing before God, and by singing His praise in temples are favoured by Vishnu. (d) Those who avoid sexual intercourse attain salvation. (e) Those who light illuminations in temples attain good luck and glory, etc.

All these observances close on the twelfth of the bright half of Kartika with due completion of the prescribed sacrifices (in some cases), and with dinners to holy and learned Brahmanas together with the intended gifts and so on.

Celebration of nuptials is in general prohibited during this period; and on the twelfth of the bright half of Kartika first divine nuptials celebrated are that of the Holy Basil with God Vishnu.

31. Yogi. One who practises Yoga.

'Yoga is the science which teaches us how to get perception, and proposes to put before humanity a practical and scientifically worked out method of reaching truth. There is no mystery. Any attempt to mystify these things is productive of great danger. This science first proposes to give us such a means of observing the internal states. When by analysing his own mind man comes face to face, as it were, with something which is never destroyed, something which is, by its own nature, eternally pure and perfect, he will no more be miserable. All misery comes from fear, from unsatisfied desire. Man will find that he never dies, and

then he will have no more fear, of death. There will be perfect bliss, even while in this body. The goal of all its teaching is how to concentrate the mind, how to discover the innermost recesses of our own minds, and how to generalise their contents and form our own conclusions from them. In the study of this Raja-Yoga no faith or belief is necessary. Truth requires no prop to make it stand. This study takes a long time and practice. A part of this practice is physical, but in the main it is mental.

'The Yogin proposes to attain that state of perception in which he can perceive all the mental states. A Yogi must avoid the two extremes of luxury and austerity.

'Certain regulations as to food are necessary; we must use that food which brings us the purest mind.' (cf. Vivekananda, Raja-Yoga)

32. *Yati*. An ascetic, Sanyasin.

56. *Tulasi-Vrindavana*. Vrindavana means a pedestal specially erected to plant the holy Basil (Tulasi) for every day worship. Every Hindu house has such a pedestal in its court-yard.

Holy attires. Clothing especially of wool and silk used by the Hindus, particularly Brahmanas for wearing at the time of the worship of God, or meals only. If cotton were to be used for the purpose, the rule is, that it should be washed and dried before the worship or the meals, as the case may be. But cotton is supposed to be of secondary importance.

Analogically, it is the same practice as adopted by Europeans in using the 'Mess Dress.'

The Indian holy attires consist of woolen or silken dhoti (Dhabali or Kada respectively, in Marathi) and a shawl. Leather footwear is strictly forbidden to be used along with these attires. If at all any footwear is necessary to be worn, it must have been made either of the deer-skin stitched with silk or jute or hessian thread, or entirely prepared of hessian or of soft straw. When in this dress, a Brahmana will necessarily have a copper or silver pot with a ladle of the same mettle, and with water in the pot.

It is essential that the diner must bathe and wear holy attires before meals - day or night, and change the attires immediately after them.

57. *Rukmini*. Wife of Krishna. She was the daughter of King Bhishmaka of Vidarbha. She was compelled to choose King Shishupala at the time of her Svayamvara, while she was secretly loving Lord Krishna. She, therefore, sent him a letter, through a trusted Brahmana, praying to take her away. On receiving the love-message, Krishna with Balarama went to Kundinapura, and, snatched her away. Rukmi - her brother and Shishupala were defeated in the open battle by Krishna and Balarama. Krishna married her after this battle.

She immolated herself, as mythology relates, on the passing away of the Lord.

... *Anchala*. The border or end of a garment. (*Padara*, in Marathi.).

Achamana rites. The word *Achamana* is derived from *Acham* - to sip, lick, lap, drink (a small quantity). Hence *Achamana* means sipping water before religious ceremonies, before and after meals and etc., from the palm of hand (part of the water sipped being usually allowed to drop down).

Achamana rites have been prescribed by the *Shruti*, *Smriti* and also *Puranas*, respectively as a part of *Brahma-Yajna* (one of the five sacrifices, to be preformed by an house-holder) and the *Darsha-Purnamasa* sacrifices, and as a part of *Sandhya* (the morning, noon and evening prayers of a *Brahmana*), and as a part of *Shoucha-Karma* (Purificatory rites).

Any rite performed without *Achamana* are void of mark and fruitless, and hence the importance of *Achamana* and its proper performance, as necessitated by the particular religious undertaking has been described in details by sages like *Vyasa*, *Shounaka* and others in the *Shruti*, *Smriti* and the *Puranas*. (cf. *M. Dk.*, Vol. VII.)

Pradakshina. Circumambulation from left to right, so that the right side is always turned towards the person or object circumambulated; a reverential salutation made by walking in this manner.

The worship of any deity is not complete unless a *Pradakshina* is made.

58 *Hasty step trod on the bitch of a tail.*
The dog is considered as an unholy animal

and hence it is prohibited from entering sacred precincts, kitchens and etc. If a dog even touches the food, it is immediately thrown away. If a holy Brahmana - male or female, is touched by a dog, esp. before worship or meals, a bath is prescribed as a means of purification.

59. *Tambula*. The leaf of piper-betel, which together with the areca-nut, catechu, chunam and spices is usually offered to the Brahmana at the end of any religious rite. *Tambula* is chewed after every meal in India. It is called *Vida* or *Pana* in Marathi. Offering and eating *Tambula* is a sign of richness. Eating of *Tambula* is a source of emancipation from all sins. It contributes to the purification of blood and body, that's the reason of its being so much relished in India.

A full chapter has been allotted to describe the importance of *Tambula* in the Skanda - Purana (cf. Nagara-khanda, Adhyaya X.) There is related a story regarding the origin of the creeper Piper-betel. The story: Nectar along with other thirteen marvels sprang up from the ocean when churned by gods and demons. Gods secured it for themselves; and having partaken of it to their heart's content, they concealed the remainder in the stables of the elephants. The elephant there spat in it, and after a time a creeper rose out of it, which was termed Naga (elephant) - valli (creeper). This story may help to realize why the eating

of Tambula is supposed to be a source of emancipation as said above.

62. *Shishupala*. Name of a king of the Chedis, and son of Damaghosha.

According to the Vishnu-Purana this monarch was in his previous birth the unrighteous Hiranyakashipu, king of the Āsuras or demons, who was killed by Vishnu, in the form of Narasimha... He was next born as ten-headed Ravana, who was killed by Rama. Then he was born as the son of Damaghosha, and continued his enmity with Krishna, the eighth incarnation of Vishnu, with even greater implacability. He denounced Krishna when they met at the Rajasuya Sacrifice of Yudhishthira; but his head was cut off by Krishna with his discus.

His death forms the subject of a celebrated poem 'Shishupala-Vadha' by Magha. (cf. A. S. D.)

64. *Aposhana*. Name of the prayer or formula repeated before and after meals. (Formulae : *Amritopastaranamasi svaha*, and *Amritapidhanamasi svaha* - meaning respectively, ' O Amrita (nectar), be a seat (Upastaranam) for the food eaten ' and ' O Amrita, be a covering (Apidhanam) for the food eaten. '), (Cf. A. S. D.).

ACT III.

71. *Vishwamitra*. Name of a Sage of the Vedic period, preceptor of King Sudasa. He was the contemporary of Vasishtha.

He was the son of Kushika.

In mythology he is said to be the son of a Kshatriya - King Gadhi. But by performing an austere penance, he had attained the status of a Brahmana Rishi. Still he lacked in tranquillity and amity, which are the prized qualities of a Brahmana; and Vasishtha, who was the very embodiment of all Brahmanic qualities, did not therefore consider him a Brahmarshi. Vishvamitra naturally hated him; and on this account put King Harishchandra - the disciple of Vasishtha - to a tortuous test. Further, he asked demon Kalmashapada to devour 100 sons of Vasishtha. Vasishtha remained undisturbed under such calamities even. Vishvamitra, later on, was ashamed of his misdeeds; and repenting, he came to his knees before Vasishtha. Seeing that he had given up anger, Vasishtha declared him to be a Brahmarshi.

Vishvamitra was successfully lured away by Menaka, an Apsaras. He set aside his long and sustained penance to enjoy the divine loveliness and voluptuous amours of Menaka, and begot on her a daughter Shakuntala - the future heroine of the celebrated classical drama *Abhijnana - Shakuntala* by poet Kalidasa, - 'The great Organ - Voice of the Orient'.

Vishvamitra had previously resisted the charms and wiles of Rambha, another Apsaras, the standard of beauty.

Menaka. Favourite Apsaras of Indra. Indra was afraid of the powers of the austere penance of Vishvamitra, which would have resulted in

the loss of his Kingship. He, therefore, ordered Menaka to go and lure him away from his penance. She knew what had happened to Rambha, who had formerly attempted to beguile the sage; and was afraid that he might burn her to death by a curse. So she requested Indra to give her assistance of Cupid. Indra did accordingly. Menaka with the help of Cupid succeeded in fascinating and ensnaring the sage completely in the meshes of her love. She lived with him and bore him a daughter (cf. Vishvamisra, p. 177).

Parashara. Name of a celebrated sage, father of Vyasa, and author of a Smṛiti. He was the son of Vasishtha (cf. Rīgveda 7. 18; 7. 104.).

(Vasishtha was the Spiritual Preceptor of King Sudasa. The seventh Mandala of Rīgveda is called the Vasishtha - Mandala.)

In mythology Parashara is said to be the grand-son of Vasishtha, and son of sage Shakti and Adrishyanti. As his father was devoured by a demon, (cf. Vishvamisra, p. 177), he wreaked vengeance and actually killed and burnt innumerable of them. He wrote a treatise on Dharmashastra called either Parashara Smṛiti or Samhita. It is chiefly formed of dialogues between himself and his son.

Vasishtha. A sage and a family priest of the kings of the Solar Race, and the author of several Vedic hymns. He was the typical representative of true Brahmanic dignity and

power; and efforts of Vishvamitra to rise to his level form the subject of many legends. (Cf. Vishvamitra, p. 177).

72. *Chati*. An orange or vermilion-colour garment worn by Sanyasins. It is of small length.

Rudraksha. *Etaeocarpus Ganitrus*, A berry of this tree used for rosary.

It's a big tree, and is found in many parts of India. The berries or fruits of it are very hard. They are used for rosaries after cleaning them. These rosaries can be had at holy places such as Benares, Prayaga, Haradvara and etc. Nowadays European merchants use them to prepare buttons, hatpins etc.

Shuka. Name of a son of Vyasa and Apsaras Ghritachi.

Lovely Ghritachi was roaming over the Earth in the form of a female parrot (shuki). Vyasa came across with her, and was so infatuated by her charms, that his seed fell at the very first sight of the celestial nymph. Shuka was born of this seed.

He was a born philosopher, and a renowned celibate. Just to lure him away, and make him break his vow of continence to enter the worldly life, Rambha was sent by Indra. But all her charms and wiles were futile before Shuka's moral, and she had to leave off her attempt to win him over to the path of love.

His name has become proverbial for the most rigid observer of continence.

73. *Rambha*. Name of an Apsaras and wife

of Nala-kubera. She was considered as the most beautiful woman in the paradise of Indra.

Sha sprang up amidst the fourteen marvels when the ocean was churned by the gods and demons. She is considered as the standard of beauty.

Kartikeya. Name of one of the sons of Shiva-Rudra and Parvati. He was the Commander-in-chief of the gods in their fight with the demon Taraka. This demon was invincible. Kartikeya was particularly born to kill him. He fulfilled his mission. He was a celibate and he had vowed not to see the woman's face. Out of regard to this vow, Indian women never visit his temple. There are many temples dedicated to God Kartikeya, generally termed as Kartika-Swami (Ascetic-Kartika) in India. He is represented as having six faces and twelve hands, and as having a peacock for his vehicle.

Kartikeya is the Mars of the Indian Mythology.

Hanumana. Name of a powerful Monkey-chief.

He was the son of Anjana by the god Wind or Marut, and hence he is called Maruti also. He is represented as a monkey of extraordinary strength and prowess, which he manifested on several occasions on behalf of Rama - the seventh incarnation of God Vishnu, whom he regarded as the idol of his heart. When Sita - the wife of Rama was carried away by the demon Ravana, he crossed the sea and

brought the news about her to her Lord. He played a very important part in the great war at Lanka between Rama and Ravana, by burning the great city. He lifted, it is said, the mountain Dromachala for the matter of his ignorance of a medicinal herb to be found on the said mountain, and which was badly wanted to treat both Rama and Laxmana, who were fainted in the war with Ravana. He was the monument of celibacy, and is classed amongst those that are deathless or immortal according to Hindu faith.

He is also regarded as a deity, and worshipped popularly by athletes, especially on every Saturday. It is supposed that Hanumana, if propitiated is capable of mitigating the ghastly effects of the influence of Saturn on man.

Bhishma. The eldest son of king Shantanu of the Lunar Race. Bhishma was born of the river Ganges. He was the sole heir to the throne after his father's death. But his father, though bowed down with age, on one occasion conceived a passion for a fisher-girl Satyawati, whom he chanced to see on the river-bank. He sent his son to negotiate the marriage. But her parents declined the offer on the ground that her sons won't succeed to the throne as Bhishma himself was the heir apparent. Bhishma instantaneously vowed before them to remain bachelor for life, and that Satyawati's sons alone will succeed his father. Shantanu was immensely pleased with his son's

attitude, and conferred on him a boon, that he will breathe his last only when he will choose to do so.

Bhishma, in the strict observance of his vow, installed his step-mother's son Vichitravirya on the throne after Shantanu's death and got him married to the two daughters of Kashiraja, and became the guardian of his sons and grandsons : Kauravas and Pandavas.

In the great Bharati War he fought on the side of Kauravas. He was wounded by Arjuna, and was lodged in a bed of arrows until he chose his time to breathe his last long after the war was over, and when he found that the Sun had crossed the vernal equinox. This great hero was remarkable for his continence, wisdom, firmness of resolve, and unflinching devotion to God. (cf. A. S. D.)

74. *Satyabhama*. Name of the daughter of king Satrajita, and the favourite wife of Krishna. It was for her, that he fought with Indra and brought Parijata tree from the paradise of Indra, and planted it in her garden. She immolated herself on the passing away of Lord Krishna.

75. *Laxmi-Vilasa*. Residence of Laxmi-the wife of Vishnu.

Vaikuntha. Abode of Vishnu.

ACT IV.

93 *Maya*. Atman (Absolute Higher Self), Brahman (Absolute knowledge), or Ananda (their essence actually realised) was the all-

pervading Reality from which emanated the Universe. This was the firm belief of the Upanishadic philosophers. Reality according to them, entered all the known and unknown universes, and was essentially one with them, though veiled from them by their varied forms, the manyness and the duality of their unessential phenomena. Shankaracharya declared that the formal, dualistic world is maya, utterly illusive and unreal having only a practical and conventional value. The doctrine of the 'unreality of the world' raised the difficult problem as to what purpose the Supreme Being had in creating this fictitious place. Shankaracharya explained this difficulty by declaring, that the Lord created this world as a mere sport (Lila) of creation to entertain Himself.

97. *Evil influence of Saturn.* Saturn (Shani) is a planet in the Solar system. It requires twentynine and a half years to complete one revolution round the Sun, which means that it remains in each sign of the Zodiac for nearly two and a half years.

It is supposed by the people, that those who are in the sign wherein is Saturn, or those in the signs near by its sign are afflicted by its evil influence for a period of seven and a half years ('Sadesati' in Marathi).

In mythology Saturn or Shani is said to be the son of the Sun and is represented as of a black colour or dressed in dark coloured clothes.

ACT V.

100. *Hastinapura*. Name of a city founded by King Hastin - descendent of Puru of the Lunar Race.

It is fifty-seven miles North-east of modern Delhi. This was the capital of Kauravas, and the chief cause of the Great Bharati War.

This city is supposed to have been swept away by the heavy floods of the Ganges. Some remnants of this city are still shown near the old course of the river.

105. *Maha - Parvati*. Festival under the auspices of the most auspicious conjunction of planets in particular signs.

106. *Danda*. A sacred staff of a sanyasin or an ascetic.

109. *Kali*. The fourth age of the world, the iron age, (consisting of 432,000 years of men, and beginning from 13th of February 3102 B. C.). (cf. A. S. D.)

The conventional idea about this age in India was, that Religion will all be done away with, and people will go to the lowest depth of culture and civilisation, peace and prosperity and etc. All sorts of sins will be rampant; and there won't be born any sage. There will live only the foolish, the ignorant and the weak-minded. People will be dwarfish, idle and impotent.

123. *Ghatotkacha*. Demon-nephew of Arjuna; son of Bhima and Hidimba. He was well versed in the demonic lores, which he had learnt from his mother. He was a staunch partisan of Pandavas, and not only did he help them, but sacrificed his own life to save Arjuna from falling a victim to Karna's celestial weapon - Shakti, in the Great Bharati War.

126 *Rakshasa*. A demon.